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## THE BEDSIDE SHAKESPEARE



*By the same author*

THE BEDSIDE BOOK  
THE TESTAMENT OF MAN  
GOOD COMPANY  
THE HOUSE OF TRANQUILLITY  
THE BEDSIDE BIBLE  
MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ  
&c.

THE  
BEDSIDE SHAKESPEARE

*AN ANTHOLOGY*

selected and arranged

by

ARTHUR STANLEY

(Editor of "The Bedside Book", etc.)

LONDON  
VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD

1948

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TO

H. I. B. M.

"All for your delight."  
*A Midsummer-Night's Dream.*

*Printed in Great Britain by  
The Camelot Press Ltd., London and Southampton*

## FOREWORD

AMONG THE GREAT BODY of readers there must be many to whom Shakespeare is little more than a name and many others to whom he is more, but who sometimes lack the time or the inclination to read throughout even one of the plays. It is my hope that this book may make conveniently accessible to such persons and others a representative and substantial portion of Shakespeare's work. We shall certainly miss a good deal if we have little or no contact with the "universal mind" of Shakespeare; for he can stir our imagination and liberate our thoughts. He can also tell us something about ourselves; for everything that is in Shakespeare is in man, and we might almost say that everything that is in man is in Shakespeare.

It may be said that all Shakespeare's works are readily accessible, and there are those who would denounce an anthologist as a tempter leading the reader away from them. But our experience shows that an anthology may even be useful in encouraging the reader to turn to the originals. Be this as it may, our appetites and our digestive organs are not always in tune for a large meal, and there are times when we find a slice of bread more suitable fare than a whole loaf. There have not been many Shakespearean anthologies. The first, *The Beauties of Shakespeare* (1752), was edited by Dr. William Dodd, who was Chaplain to the King. This editor was executed some years later for a different kind of crime. Dr. Dodd's fate, considered as an omen, was not encouraging to others; but there have been several later anthologies, though none built on a plan similar to that of the present book.

I have brought together a wide selection of scenes and passages, grave or gay, familiar or unfamiliar; and wherever this book is opened the reader will find something which has been selected because of its special interest. Here, then, are some notable reflections of Shakespeare's mirror held up to nature, disclosing the thoughts, actions, passions, hopes, fears, adventures and experiences which make up the life of man. I have provided a

considerable variety of matter, with a view to meeting the varying moods of the reader, and the title of each section indicates the character of its contents.

Though intended for the common reader, this anthology may be of some interest to the serious student, who may find useful information in the introductions or footnotes. I am a lover of Shakespeare rather than a Shakespearean scholar, and do not claim to have made any important discoveries; but I may say that what is probably the original text of the song *It was a lover and his lass* now appears for the first time in any Shakespearean book. By kind permission of the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, I am able to give my readers the benefit of several emendations included in the edition of Shakespeare's plays known as *The New Shakespeare* (edited by Professor John Dover Wilson and published by the Cambridge University Press). Generally, I have, by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. Ltd., followed the text of their *Globe* edition; and where I have not done so a note will be found to this effect. In the footnotes references to the *New Shakespeare* edition are indicated by the abbreviation "N.S." I am indebted to Messrs. Constable & Co. Ltd., for permission to include the extract from *On Reading Shakespeare* which appears at p. 279 and to Professor F. W. Baxter for reading the proofs of this book.

A. S.

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## TO THE GREAT VARIETY OF READERS

As he was a happie imitator of Nature, was a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together: And what he thought, he uttered with that easinesse, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers. But it is not our province, who onely gather his works and give them you, to praise him. It is yours that read him.

JOHN HEMING and HENRY CONDELL  
(from Preface to the *First Folio*, 1623).

## THE AUTHOR

**W**ILLIAM SHAKESPEARE WAS BORN at Stratford-on-Avon in the year 1564 and died there in the year 1616. He was married at eighteen to a woman of twenty-six. He went to live in London, and in the last decade of the sixteenth century he had become known as a leading actor, poet and dramatist. He was a member and "shareholder" in the Lord Chamberlain's company of players, for whom he wrote his plays, which were popular, and he became a wealthy man. He made investments in house property, land and tithes, and in 1597 purchased New Place at Stratford, said to have been then the largest house in the town. About the same time his father, who was one of the leading citizens of Stratford, applied for and afterwards obtained the grant of a coat-of-arms from the College of Heralds.

When about forty-seven years of age, Shakespeare retired to Stratford, where he died at the age of fifty-two. He had one son, Hamnet, who died at the age of eleven, and two daughters, Susanna and Judith. Susanna married Thomas Quiney, a Stratford vintner; and Judith married John Hall, a Stratford physician. Mrs. Hall's daughter Elizabeth, who died in 1670, was Shakespeare's last surviving descendant.

Shakespeare's name is recorded in certain lawsuits as plaintiff, defendant or witness; there are records of his baptism and burial; and his will is preserved at Somerset House. Ben Jonson, who knew him and loved him, has said: "He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature"; and the son of one of his fellow players has described him as "a handsome, well-shaped man, very good company, and of a very ready and pleasant smooth wit."

Beyond this, there is little more of any importance which can be said with certainty. The known facts are few, and a longer tale would require the assistance of tradition, conjecture and



inference. It is disappointing that we know so little about the greatest man of our race; but we may reflect that this fact is not entirely a disadvantage, since Shakespeare has thus a kind of freedom which is almost unique. He does not "abide our question."

A. S.

# I

## THE ANCIENT WORLD

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## THE ANCIENT WORLD

[Dr. Johnson was impressed by the "pleasing and interesting variety" of *Coriolanus*, yet of the three plays dealt with in this section it is the least known, and it is seldom acted. In all of them Shakespeare has followed more or less closely the stories he found in Sir Thomas North's version of Plutarch's *Lives*. *Coriolanus*, the latest of these three plays, seems to have been written soon after *Antony and Cleopatra*. As to the story, it is legend rather than history, and is concerned with the time (fifth century B.C.) when Rome, hard pressed by the Volscians, was the scene of internal strife between Patricians and Plebeians. In his historical plays Shakespeare is not writing history, and the *dramatis personæ* are men and women rather than historical characters. As Goethe has remarked, "Shakespeare makes his Romans Elizabethans, for otherwise his nation would not have understood him."

The play of *Julius Cæsar* exposes the evil results of rebellion and civil strife. Although it was written (1599) in "the Golden Age" of Queen Elizabeth, succession to the throne was then in doubt, and her subjects were living in dread of civil war. Essex, the Queen's cousin and close friend of Shakespeare's patron Southampton, was in disgrace and already threatening to march on London. Professor Dover Wilson has suggested that Shakespeare intended to offer as a warning to the ill-fated nobleman this play of "dark conspiracy and noble idealism brought to nought". Julius Cæsar is not the hero, and the chief interest turns on the character of Brutus—"the noblest Roman"—in contrast with that of Cassius.

Strange to say, *Antony and Cleopatra* has never been popular on the stage, and there is no record of any performance during the author's lifetime or soon after his death. Shakespeare has indeed chosen a vast canvas on which to paint this picture of the Roman world; but the action is quick, and by a great variety of incidents the interest is sustained throughout. The play abounds in famous passages, and Cleopatra's death-scene is not surpassed by anything Shakespeare has given us elsewhere. If we find it difficult to sympathise deeply with Antony, whose nobility is so much impaired by weakness, we shall not find it easy to escape being bewitched by the glamour of "the Gipsy Queen," which is increased by her majestic death.]

## I. ROME

### CORIOLANUS AND THE VOLSCIANS

[Caius Marcius, a proud Patrician, was given the name Coriolanus because he recovered the city of Corioli from the Volscians. He treated the Plebeians and their Tribunes with contempt. Now, in spite of his great services to the State, he has been banished from Rome.]

*Scene—Rome. Before a gate of the city*

*Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA (his mother), VIRGILIA (his wife) and the young nobility of Rome.*

CORIOLANUS: Come, leave your tears; a brief farewell. The beast<sup>1</sup>  
With many heads butts me away.—Nay, mother,  
Where is your ancient courage? you were used  
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;  
That common chances common men could bear;  
That, when the sea was calm, all boats alike  
Showed mastership in floating; fortune's blows,  
When most struck home, being gentle<sup>2</sup> wounded, craves  
A noble cunning: you were used to load me  
With precepts that would make invincible  
The heart that conned them.

VIRGILIA: O heavens! O heavens!

CORIOLANUS: Nay, I prithee, woman,—

VOLUMNIA: Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,  
And occupations perish!

CORIOLANUS: What, what, what!  
I shall be loved when I am lacked. Nay, mother,  
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,  
If you had been the wife of Hercules,  
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved  
Your husband so much sweat.—Cominius,  
Droop not; adieu.—Farewell, my wife, my mother;

<sup>1</sup> I.e., the many-headed multitude.

<sup>2</sup> A difficult passage. The meaning appears to be "When fortune's blows are heavy, a gentleman knows how to behave." (*Cunning* = *skill*).



insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

THIRD SERVING-MAN: 'Tis so: and as war, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

SECOND SERVING-MAN: Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

FIRST SERVING-MAN: Reason—because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians.

[The Volscian forces, led by Coriolanus, are approaching the gates of Rome. All attempts to treat with Coriolanus have been fruitless, even his old friend Menenius has been turned away. The city is in mourning, and the women are weeping and praying in the temples. At length the mother of Coriolanus, his wife, and child appear before his tent.]

*Scene—the tent of CORIOLANUS*

*Present:* CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS *and others.* *Enter, in mourning habits,* VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, *young* MARCIUS, VALERIA *and* ATTENDANTS. VOLUMNIA *kneels.*

CORIOLANUS:                               What is this?  
Your knees to me? to your corrected son?  
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds  
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun;  
Murdering impossibility, to make  
What cannot be, slight work.

VOLUMNIA:                               Thou art my warrior;  
I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

CORIOLANUS: The noble sister of Publicola,  
The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle  
That's curdied by the frost from purest snow  
And hangs on Dian's temple: dear Valeria!

VOLUMNIA: This is a poor epitome of yours,  
Which by the interpretation of full time  
May show like all yourself.

CORIOLANUS:                   The god of soldiers,  
 With the consent of supreme Jove, inform  
 Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst prove  
 To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars  
 Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,<sup>1</sup>  
 And saving those that eye thee! . . . Your request?

VOLUMNIA: Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment  
 And state of bodies would bewray what life  
 We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself  
 How more unfortunate than all living women  
 Are we come hither: since that sight, which should  
 Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,  
 Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow;  
 Making the mother, wife, and child, to see  
 The son, the husband, and the father, tearing  
 His country's bowels out. And to poor we  
 Thine enmity's most capital: thou barrest us  
 Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort  
 That all but we enjoy; for how can we,  
 Alas, how can we for our country pray,  
 Whereto we are bound—together with thy victory,  
 Whereto we are bound? alack, or we must lose  
 The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,  
 Our comfort in the country. We must find  
 An evident calamity, though we had  
 Our wish, which side should win; for either thou  
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led  
 With manacles through our streets, or else  
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,  
 And bear the palm for having bravely shed  
 Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,  
 I purpose not to wait on fortune till  
 These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee  
 Rather to show a noble grace to both parts  
 Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner  
 March to assault thy country than to tread—  
 Trust to't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb  
 That brought thee to this world.

<sup>1</sup> Gust.

**VIRGILIA:** Ay, and mine,  
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name  
Living to time.

**YOUNG MARCIUS:** 'A shall not tread on me;  
I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

CORIOANUS: Not of a woman's tenderness to be,  
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see . . .  
(He rises and holds VOLUMNIA by the hand)

O mother, mother!

What have you done? Behold, the heavens do open,  
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene  
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!  
You have won a happy victory to Rome;  
But, for your son, believe it, O, believe it,  
Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,  
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.—  
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,  
I'll frame convenient peace.—Now, good Aufidius,  
Were you in my stead, would you have heard  
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

**AUFIDIUS:** I was moved withal.

CORIOLANUS: I dare be sworn you were:  
And, sir, it is no little thing to make  
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,  
What peace you'll make, advise me: for my part  
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,  
Stand to me in this cause.—O mother! wife! . . .  
But we will drink together; and you shall bear  
A better witness back than words, which we,  
On like conditions, will have counter-sealed.  
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve  
To have a temple built you: all the swords  
In Italy, and her confederate arms,  
Could not have made this peace.



•

*Present: MENENIUS, friend to CORIOLANUS, and SICINIUS, a Tribune of the people. Enter a MESSENGER.*

MESSANGER: Good news, good news! The ladies have prevailed,  
The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone:  
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,  
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

**SICINIUS:** Friend,  
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?

**MESSANGER:** As certain as I know the sun is fire:  
 Where have you lurked, that you make doubt of it?  
 Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide  
 As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark you!

*Trumpets, hautboys, drums, beat all together.*

**The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,  
Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting Romans,  
Make the sun dance. Hark you! (*A shout within.*)**

**MENENIUS:** This is good news.

[Coriolanus has become in fact the leader of the Volscians, and Aufidius, resenting his inferior position, conspires against his ally.]

*Scene—Corioli. A public place*

*Present: AUFIDIUS, with LORDS and ATTENDANTS and three or four CONSPIRATORS of AUFIDIUS' faction. Enter CORIOLANUS, marching with drum and colours, the COMMONERS being with him.*

CORIOLANUS: Hail, lords! I am returned your soldier;  
No more infected with my country's love  
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting  
Under your great command. You are to know,  
That prosperously I have attempted, and,  
With bloody passage, led your wars even to  
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home  
Do more than counterpoise a full third part  
The charges of the action. We have made peace,

With no less honour to the Antiates  
Than shame to the Romans: and we here deliver,  
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,  
Together with the seal o' the senate, what  
We have compounded on.

AUFIDIUS:                               Read it not, noble lords;  
But tell the traitor, in the highest degree  
He hath abused your powers.

CORIOLANUS:                           Traitor!—how now!

AUFIDIUS: Ay, traitor, Marcius!

CORIOLANUS: Marcius!

•AUFIDIUS: Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius; dost thou think  
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stolen name  
Coriolanus, in Corioli?—  
You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously  
He has betrayed your business, and given up,  
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome—  
I say, your city—to his wife and mother;  
Breaking his oath and resolution, like  
A twist of rotten silk; never admitting  
Counsel o' the war; but at his nurse's tears  
He whined and roared away your victory,  
That pages blushed at him, and men of heart  
Looked wondering each at other.

CORIOLANUS:                           Hear'st thou, Mars?

AUFIDIUS: Name not the god, thou boy of tears! . . .

CORIOLANUS: Boy! false hound!  
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,  
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I  
Fluttered your Volscians in Corioli:  
Alone I did it.—Boy!

AUFIDIUS:                               Why, noble lords,  
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,  
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,  
'Fore your own eyes and ears?

ALL THE CONSPIRATORS:           Let him die for't!

ALL THE PEOPLE: Tear him to pieces!—Do it presently!—He killed my son!—My daughter!—He killed my cousin Marcus!—He killed my father!

FIRST LORD: Peace, ho! no outrage—peace!  
The man is noble, and his fame folds-in  
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us  
Shall have judicious hearing.—Stand, Aufidius,  
And trouble not the peace.

CORIOLANUS: O, that I had him,  
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,  
To use my lawful sword!

AUFIDIUS: Insolent villain!

ALL THE CONSPIRATORS: Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

*The CONSPIRATORS draw, and kill CORIOLANUS. AUFIDIUS stands on his body.*

LORDS: Hold, hold, hold, hold!

AUFIDIUS: My noble masters, hear me speak.

FIRST LORD: O Tullus,—

SECOND LORD: Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will weep.

THIRD LORD: Tread not upon him.—Masters all, be quiet;  
Put up your swords.

AUFIDIUS: My lords, when you shall know—as in this rage,  
Provoked by him, you cannot—the great danger  
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice  
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours  
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver  
Myself your loyal servant, or endure  
Your heaviest censure.

FIRST LORD: Bear from hence his body,  
And mourn you for him. Let him be regarded  
As the most noble corse that ever herald  
Did follow to his urn.

SECOND LORD: His own impatience  
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.  
Let's make the best of it.

*From Coriolanus.*

## CÆSAR'S FALL AND WHAT FOLLOWS

*Scene—Rome. A street*

*Enter the tribunes FLAVIUS and MARULLUS and certain COMMONERS over the stage. FLAVIUS addresses one of the COMMONERS, who is a cobbler and is leading the crowd.*

FLAVIUS: Wherefore art thou not in thy shop to-day?  
Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

COMMONER: Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself into more work. But, indeed, sir, we make holiday, to see Cæsar, and to rejoice in his triumph.

• MARULLUS: Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?  
What tributaries follow him to Rome,  
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?  
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!  
O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,  
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft  
Have you climbed up to walls and battlements,  
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,  
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat  
The live-long day, with patient expectation,  
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:  
And when you saw his chariot but appear,  
Have you not made an universal shout,  
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,  
To hear the replication of your sounds  
Made in her concave shores?  
And do you now put on your best attire?  
And do you now cull out a holiday?  
And do you now strew flowers in his way  
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?  
Be gone!  
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,  
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague  
That needs must light on this ingratitude.

FLAVIUS: Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault,  
Assemble all the poor men of your sort;

Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears  
Into the channel, till the lowest stream  
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.

*Exeunt all the COMMONERS.*

See whether their basest metal be not moved!  
They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.  
Go you down that way towards the Capitol;  
This way will I: disrobe the images,  
If you do find them decked with ceremonies.

MARULLUS: May we do so?  
You know it is the feast of Lupercal.

FLAVIUS: It is no matter; let no images  
Be hung with Cæsar's trophies. I'll about,  
And drive away the vulgar from the streets:  
So do you too, where you perceive them thick.  
These growing feathers plucked from Cæsar's wing  
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,  
Who else would soar above the view of men,  
And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

[Brutus has been persuaded by Cassius to join in the plot to assassinate Cæsar. The conspirators are about to assemble at the house of Brutus, who communes with himself pending their arrival.]

*Scene—BRUTUS' orchard*

BRUTUS: It must be by his death: and, for my part,  
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,  
But for the general. He would be crowned:—  
How that might change his nature, there's the question:  
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;  
And that craves wary walking. Crown him?—that;—  
And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,  
That at his will he may do danger with.  
The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins  
Remorse from power: and, to speak truth of Cæsar,  
I have not known when his affections swayed  
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,

That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,  
 Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;  
 But when he once attains the upmost round,  
 He then unto the ladder turns his back,  
 Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees  
 By which he did ascend: so Cæsar may;  
 Then lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel  
 Will bear no colour for the thing he is,  
 Fashion it thus—that what he is, augmented,  
 Would run to these and these extremities:  
 And therefore think him as a serpent's egg,  
 Which, hatched, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,  
 And kill him in the shell. . . .  
 Since Cassius first did whet me against Cæsar  
 I have not slept:  
 • Between the acting of a dreadful thing  
 And the first motion, all the interim is  
 Like a phantasma or a hideous dream:  
 The Genius and the mortal instruments  
 Are then in council; and the state of man,  
 Like to a little kingdom, suffers then  
 The nature of an insurrection.

*Scene—the same. Early morning*

*Present: BRUTUS. Enter PORTIA, BRUTUS' wife.*

BRUTUS: Portia, what mean you? wherefore rise you now?  
 It is not for your health thus to commit  
 Your weak condition to the raw-cold morning.

PORTIA: Nor for yours neither. You've ungently, Brutus,  
 Stole from my bed: and yesternight, at supper,  
 You suddenly arose, and walked about,  
 Musing and sighing, with your arms across;  
 And when I asked you what the matter was,  
 You stared upon me with ungentle looks:  
 I urged you further; then you scratched your head,  
 And too impatiently stamped with your foot:  
 Yet I insisted, yet you answered not;

But, with an angry wafture of your hand,  
Gave sign for me to leave you: so I did,  
Fearing to strengthen that impatience  
Which seemed too much enkindled, and withal  
Hoping it was but an effect of humour,  
Which sometime hath his hour with every man.  
It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep;  
And, could it work so much upon your shape,  
As it hath much prevailed on your condition,  
I should not know you, Brutus. Dear my lord,  
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.

BRUTUS: I am not well in health, and that is all.

PORTIA: Brutus is wise, and, were he not in health,  
He would embrace the means to come by it.

BRUTUS: Why, so I do.—Good Portia, go to bed.

PORTIA: Is Brutus sick,—and is it physical<sup>1</sup>  
To walk unbracéd, and suck up the humours  
Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick,—  
And will he steal out of his wholesome bed,  
To dare the vile contagion of the night,  
And tempt the rheumy and unpurgéd air  
To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus;  
You have some sick offence within your mind,  
Which, by the right and virtue of my place,  
I ought to know of: and, upon my knees,  
I charm you, by my once-commended beauty,  
By all your vows of love, and that great vow  
Which did incorporate and make us one,  
That you unfold to me, yourself, your half,  
Why you are heavy; and what men to-night  
Have had resort to you,—for here have been  
Some six or seven, who did hide their faces  
Even from darkness.

BRUTUS:                      Kneel not, gentle Portia.

PORTIA: I should not need, if you were gentle Brutus.  
Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,

<sup>1</sup> Wholesome.

Is it excepted I should know no secrets  
That appertain to you? Am I yourself  
But, as it were, in sort or limitation—  
To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed,  
And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs  
Of your good pleasure? If it be no more,  
Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

BRUTUS: You are my true and honourable wife;  
As dear to me as are the ruddy drops  
That visit my sad heart.

PORTIA: If this were true, then should I know this secret.  
I grant I am a woman; but withal  
A woman that lord Brutus took to wife:  
I grant I am a woman; but withal  
A woman well-reputed—Cato's daughter.  
Think you I am no stronger than my sex,  
Being so fathered and so husbanded?  
Tell me your counsels; I will not disclose 'em:  
I have made strong proof of my constancy,  
Giving myself a voluntary wound  
Here, in the thigh. Can I bear that with patience,  
And not my husband's secrets?

BRUTUS: O ye gods,  
Render me worthy of this noble wife! (*Knocking within.*)  
Hark, hark! one knocks. Portia, go in awhile;  
And by and by thy bosom shall partake  
The secrets of my heart.

*Scene—A hall in CÆSAR'S palace*

*Present: CÆSAR, in his night-gown.<sup>1</sup> Thunder and lightning. Enter  
CALPURNIA, CÆSAR'S wife.*

CALPURNIA: What mean you, Cæsar? think you to walk forth?  
You shall not stir out of your house to-day.

CÆSAR: Cæsar shall forth: the things that threatened me  
Ne'er looked but on my back; when they shall see  
The face of Cæsar, they are vanished.

<sup>1</sup> We do not know in what costume the Elizabethan actor made this appearance; but Cæsar's "night-gown" is evidently the sixteenth-century equivalent of the modern "dressing-gown" and not a garment worn in bed.



CALPURNIA: Cæsar, I never stood on ceremonies,  
Yet now they fright me. There is one within,  
Besides the things that we have heard and seen,  
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.  
A lioness hath whelpéd in the streets;  
And graves have yawned, and yielded up their dead;  
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,  
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,  
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;  
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,  
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan;  
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.  
O Cæsar, these things are beyond all use,  
And I do fear them!

CÆSAR:                               What can be avoided  
Whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?  
Yet Cæsar shall go forth; for these predictions  
Are to the world in general as to Cæsar.

\*CALPURNIA: When beggars die, there are no comets seen:  
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

\*CÆSAR: Cowards die many times before their deaths:  
The valiant never taste of death but once.  
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,  
It seems to me most strange that men should fear,  
Seeing that death, a necessary end,  
Will come when it will come . . .

CALPURNIA:                               Alas, my lord,  
Your wisdom is consumed in confidence.  
Do not go forth to-day: call it my fear  
That keeps you in the house, and not your own.  
We'll send Mark Antony to the senate-house;  
And he shall say you are not well to-day.  
Let me, upon my knee, prevail in this.

CÆSAR: Mark Antony shall say I am not well;  
And, for thy humour, I will stay at home.

*Enter DECIVS.*

Here's Decius Brutus, he shall tell them so.

DECIUS: Cæsar, all hail! good morrow, worthy Cæsar.  
I come to fetch you to the senate-house . . .

CÆSAR: Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home.  
She dreamt to-night she saw my statua,  
Which, like a fountain with a hundred spouts,  
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans  
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it:  
And these does she apply for warnings and portents  
And evils imminent; and on her knee  
Hath begged that I will stay at home to-day.

DECIUS: This dream is all amiss interpreted;  
It was a vision fair and fortunate:  
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,  
In which so many smiling Romans bathed,  
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck  
Reviving blood; and that great men shall press  
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.  
This by Calpurnia's dream is signified.

CÆSAR: And this way have you well expounded it.

DECIUS: I have, when you have heard what I can say:  
And know it now—the senate have concluded  
To give, this day, a crown to mighty Cæsar.  
If you shall send them word you will not come,  
Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock  
Apt to be rendered, for some one to say,  
“Break up the senate till another time,  
When Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams.”  
If Cæsar hide himself, shall they not whisper,  
“Lo, Cæsar is afraid”?

Pardon me, Cæsar; for my dear dear love  
To your proceeding bids me tell you this;  
And reason to my love is liable.

CÆSAR: How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia!  
I am ashamed I did yield to them.—  
Give me my robe, for I will go.



And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,  
Speak in the order of his funeral.  
BRUTUS: You shall, Mark Antony.

*Scene—The Forum*

*A throng of CITIZENS. Enter ANTONY with CÆSAR'S body. ANTONY enters the pulpit.*

ANTONY: Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;  
I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.  
The evil that men do lives after them;  
The good is oft interréd with their bones;  
So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus  
Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious:  
If it were so, it was a grievous fault;  
And grievously hath Cæsar answered it.  
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,—  
For Brutus is an honourable man;  
So are they all, all honourable men,—  
Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.  
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:  
But Brutus says he was ambitious;  
And Brutus is an honourable man.  
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,  
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:  
Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?  
When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept:  
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:  
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;  
And Brutus is an honourable man.  
You all did see that on the Lupercal  
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,  
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?  
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And, sure, he is an honourable man.  
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,  
But here I am to speak what I do know.  
You all did love him once,—not without cause:

What cause withholds you, then, to mourn for him?  
O judgement, thou art fled to brutish beasts,  
And men have lost their reason!—Bear with me;  
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,  
And I must pause till it come back to me.

FIRST CITIZEN: Methinks there is much reason in his sayings. . . .

ANTONY: But yesterday the word of Cæsar might  
Have stood against the world: now lies he there,  
And none so poor to do him reverence.

O masters, if I were disposed to stir  
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,  
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,  
Who, you all know, are honourable men:  
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose  
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself, and you,  
Than I will wrong such honourable men.  
But here's a parchment with the seal of Cæsar,—  
I found it in his closet,—'tis his will:  
Let but the commons hear this testament,—  
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,—  
And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds,  
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,  
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,  
And, dying, mention it within their wills,  
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,  
Unto their issue.

FIRST CITIZEN: We'll hear the will: read it, Mark Antony.

CITIZENS: The will, the will! we will hear Cæsar's will . . .

ANTONY: You will compel me, then, to read the will?  
Then make a ring about the corpse of Cæsar,  
And let me show him that made the will. (*ANTONY comes down.*)  
If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.  
You all do know this mantle: I remember  
The first time ever Cæsar put it on;  
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,  
That day he overcame the Nervii:—  
Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:  
See what a rent the envious Casca made:

Through this the well-belovéd Brutus stabbed;  
And, as he plucked his cursed steel away,  
Mark how the blood of Cæsar followed it,  
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved  
If Brutus so unkindly knocked, or no;  
For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel:  
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Cæsar loved him!  
This was the most unkindest cut of all:  
For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,  
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,  
Quite vanquished him: then burst his mighty heart;  
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,  
Even at the base of Pompey's statua,  
Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.  
O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!  
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,  
Whilst bloody treason flourished over us.  
O, now you weep; and, I perceive, you feel  
The dint of pity: these are gracious drops.  
Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold  
Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look you here,  
Here is himself, marred, as you see, with traitors.

FIRST CITIZEN: O piteous spectacle!

SECOND CITIZEN: O noble Cæsar! . . .

ANTONY: Here is the will, and under Cæsar's seal:—  
To every Roman citizen he gives,  
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas . . .  
Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,  
His private arbours, and new-planted orchards,  
On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,  
And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,  
To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.  
Here was a Cæsar! when comes such another?

FIRST CITIZEN: Never, never.—Come, away, away! . . .

ANTONY: Now let it work:—mischief, thou art afoot,  
Take thou what course thou wilt!

[The "mischief" begun by Antony quickly spread, and the conspirators fled, leaving Antony for a time virtual ruler of Rome. Brutus and Cassius have made themselves masters of the East, and are now at Sardis, where they quarrel. Eventually a Triumvirate is formed consisting of Antony, Lepidus and Octavius Cæsar; and their forces, advancing into Macedonia, defeat the army of Brutus and Cassius on the plains of Philippi.]

*Scene—within the tent of BRUTUS*

BRUTUS: You say you are a better soldier:  
Let it appear so; make your vaunting true,  
And it shall please me well: for mine own part,  
I shall be glad to learn of noble men.

CASSIUS: You wrong me every way; you wrong me, Brutus,  
I said, an elder soldier, not a better:  
Did I say "better"?

BRUTUS: If you did, I care not.

CASSIUS: When Cæsar lived he durst not thus have moved me.

BRUTUS: Peace, peace! you durst not so have tempted him.

CASSIUS: I durst not!

BRUTUS: No.

CASSIUS: What, durst not tempt him!

BRUTUS: For your life you durst not.

CASSIUS: Do not presume too much upon my love;  
I may do that I shall be sorry for.

BRUTUS: You have done that you should be sorry for.  
There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats;  
For I am armed so strong in honesty,  
That they pass by me as the idle wind,  
Which I respect not. I did send to you  
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me;—  
For I can raise no money by vile means:  
By heaven, I had rather coin my heart,  
And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring  
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash  
By any indirection;—I did send  
To you for gold to pay my legions,  
Which you denied me: was that done like Cassius?





That carries anger as the flint bears fire;  
Who, much enforcéd, shows a hasty spark,  
And straight is cold again.

CASSIUS:                   Hath Cassius lived  
To be but mirth and laughter to his Brutus,  
When grief, and blood ill-tempered, vexeth him?

BRUTUS: When I spoke that, I was ill-tempered too.

CASSIUS: Do you confess so much? Give me your hand.

BRUTUS: And my heart too. . . . Lucius, a bowl of wine!

CASSIUS: I did not think you could have been so angry.

BRUTUS: O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.

CASSIUS: Of your philosophy you make no use,  
If you give place to accidental evils.

BRUTUS: No man bears sorrow better:—Portia is dead.

CASSIUS: Ha! Portia!

BRUTUS: She is dead.

CASSIUS: How 'scaped I killing when I crossed you so?—  
O insupportable and touching loss!—  
Upon what sickness?

BRUTUS:                   Impatient of my absence,  
And grief that young Octavius with Mark Antony  
Have made themselves so strong;—for with her death  
That tidings came;—with this she fell distract,  
And, her attendants absent, swallowed fire.

CASSIUS: And died so?

BRUTUS: Even so.

CASSIUS:                   O ye immortal gods!

*Enter LUCIUS with wine and taper.*

BRUTUS: Speak no more of her.—Give me a bowl of wine.—  
In this I bury all unkindness, Cassius. (*Drinks.*)

CASSIUS: My heart is thirsty for that noble pledge.—  
Fill, Lucius, till the wine o'erswell the cup;  
I cannot drink too much of Brutus' love. (*Drinks.*)

*Enter TITINIUS, with MESSALA. Exit LUCIUS.*

BRUTUS: Come in, Titinius! Welcome, good Messala!  
Now sit we close about this taper here,  
And call in question our necessities. . . .  
Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe:  
The enemy increaseth every day;  
We, at the height, are ready to decline.  
There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat;  
And we must take the current when it serves,  
Or lose our ventures.

CASSIUS:                   Then, with your will, go on;  
We'll along ourselves, and meet them at Philippi.

BRUTUS: The deep of night is crept upon our talk,  
And nature must obey necessity;  
Which we will niggard with a little rest.  
There is no more to say?

CASSIUS:                   No more. Good night:  
Early to-morrow will we rise, and hence.

*Scene—The plains of Philippi*

CASSIUS: Why, now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!  
The storm is up, and all is on the hazard. . . .  
The gods to-day stand friendly, that we may,  
Lovers in peace, lead on our days to age!  
But, since the affairs of men rest still incertain,  
Let's reason with the worst that may befall.  
If we do lose this battle, then is this  
The very last time we shall speak together:  
What are you then determinéd to do?

BRUTUS: Even by the rule of that philosophy  
By which I did blame Cato for the death  
Which he did give himself:—I know not how,  
But I do find it cowardly and vile,  
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent

The time of life:—arming myself with patience  
To stay the providence of some high powers  
That govern us below.

CASSIUS:                   Then, if we lose this battle,  
You are contented to be led in triumph  
Thorough the streets of Rome?

BRUTUS: No, Cassius, no: think not, thou noble Roman,  
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;  
He bears too great a mind. But this same day  
Must end that work the ides of March begun;  
And whether we shall meet again I know not.  
Therefore our everlasting farewell take:—  
For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!  
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;  
If not, why then, this parting was well made.

CASSIUS: For ever, and for ever, farewell, Brutus!  
If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;  
If not, 'tis true this parting was well made.

BRUTUS: Why then, lead on.—O, that a man might know  
The end of this day's business ere it come!  
But it sufficeth that the day will end,  
And then the end is known.

*Scene—Another part of the field*

*Enter OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, LUCILIUS and MESSALA, discovering  
STRATO, servant of BRUTUS.*

OCTAVIUS: What man is that?

MESSALA: My master's man.—Strato, where is thy master?

STRATO: Free from the bondage you are in, Messala:  
The conquerors can but make a fire of him;  
For Brutus only overcame himself,  
And no man else hath honour by his death.

LUCILIUS: So Brutus should be found.—I thank thee, Brutus,  
That thou hast proved Lucilius' saying true. . . .

• ANTONY: This was the noblest Roman of them all:  
All the conspirators, save only he,

Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar;  
He only, in a general honest thought,  
And common good to all, made one of them.  
His life was gentle; and the elements  
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

From *Julius Cæsar*.

## 2. EGYPT

### ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

*Scene—Alexandria. A room in CLEOPATRA'S palace. Enter  
CLEOPATRA with CHARMIAN, her attendant.*

CLEOPATRA: O Charmian,  
Where think'st thou he is now? Stands he, or sits he?  
Or does he walk? or is he on his horse?  
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!  
Do bravely, horse! for wott'st thou whom thou movest?  
The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm  
And burgonet of men.—he's speaking now,  
Or murmuring, "Where's my serpent of old Nile?"  
For so he calls me:—now I feed myself  
With most delicious poison:—think on me,  
That am with Phoebus' amorous pinches black,  
And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted Cæsar,  
When thou wast here above the ground, I was  
A morsel for a monarch; and great Pompey  
Would stand, and make his eyes grow in my brow;  
There would he anchor his aspéct, and die  
With looking on his life.

*Enter ALEXAS, attendant on CLEOPATRA.*

ALEXAS: Sovereign of Egypt, hail!

CLEOPATRA: How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!  
Yet, coming from him, that great medicine hath

With his tinct gilded thee.—

How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?

ALEXAS: Last thing he did, dear queen,  
He kist—the last of many doubled kisses—  
This orient pearl:—his speech sticks in my heart.

CLEOPATRA: Mine ear must pluck it thence.

ALEXAS: “Good friend,” quoth he,  
“Say, the firm Roman to great Egypt sends  
This treasure of an oyster; at whose foot,  
To mend the petty present, I will piece  
Her opulent throne with kingdoms, all the east,  
Say thou, shall call her mistress.” So he nodded,  
And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,  
Who neighed so high, that what I would have spoke  
Was beastly dumb’d by him.

CLEOPATRA: What, was he sad or merry?

ALEXAS: Like to the time o’ the year between the extremes  
Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.

• CLEOPATRA: O well-divided disposition!—Note him,  
Note him, good Charmian, ’tis the man; but note him:  
He was not sad,—for he would shine on those  
That make their looks by his; he was not merry,—  
Which seemed to tell them his remembrance lay  
In Egypt with his joy; but between both:  
O heavenly mingle!—Be’st thou sad or merry,  
The violence of either thee becomes,  
So does it no man else.—Mett’st thou my posts?

ALEXAS: Ay, madam, twenty several<sup>1</sup> messengers:  
Why do you send so thick?

CLEOPATRA: Who’s born that day  
When I forget to send to Antony,  
Shall die a beggar.—Ink and paper, Charmian,—  
Get me ink and paper:  
He shall have every day a several greeting,  
Or I’ll unpeople Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> Separate.

[In Rome, a friend of Mark Antony describes Cleopatra to a friend of Octavius Cæsar.]

*Scene—A room in the house of LEPIDUS*

•ENOBARBUS: The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,  
Burned on the water: the poop was beaten gold;  
Purple the sails, and so perfuméd that  
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,  
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made  
The water which they beat to follow faster,  
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,  
It beggared all description: she did lie  
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—  
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see  
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her  
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,  
With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem  
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,  
And what they undid did.

AGRIPPA:

O, rare for Antony!

•ENOBARBUS: Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,  
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,  
And made their bends adornings: at the helm  
A seeming mermaid steers: the silken tackle  
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,  
That yarely frame<sup>1</sup> the office. From the barge  
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense  
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast  
Her people out upon her; and Antony,  
Enthroned i' the market-place, did sit alone,  
Whistling to the air; which, but for vacancy,  
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,  
And made a gap in nature.

AGRIPPA:

Rare Egyptian! . . .

ENOBARBUS: Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety: other women cloy  
The appetites they feed; but she makes hungry

<sup>1</sup> *yarely frame* = quickly contrive.

Where most she satisfies: for vilest things  
Become themselves in her, that the holy priests  
Bless her when she is riggish.<sup>1</sup>

[The warships of Antony and the Egyptian fleet have been attacked at sea by the fleet of Octavius Cæsar. Cleopatra has sailed away with her sixty ships, and Antony, abandoning his fleet, has followed her to Egypt in a galley.]

*Scene—Alexandria. A room in CLEOPATRA'S palace*

ANTONY: O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See,  
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes  
By looking back what I have left behind  
'Stroy'd in dishonour.

CLEOPATRA: O my lord, my lord,  
Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought  
You would have followed.

ANTONY: Egypt, thou knew'st too well  
My heart was to thy rudder tied by the strings,  
And thou shouldst tow me after: o'er my spirit  
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that  
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods  
Command me.

CLEOPATRA: O, my pardon!

ANTONY: Now I must  
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge  
And palter in the shifts of lowness, who  
With half the bulk o' the world played as I pleased,  
Making and marring fortunes. You did know  
How much you were my conqueror; and that  
My sword, made weak by my affection, would  
Obey it on all cause.

CLEOPATRA: Pardon, pardon!

ANTONY: Fall not a tear, I say; one of them rates  
All that is won and lost: give me a kiss;  
Even this repays me.—We sent our school-master;  
Is he come back?—Love, I am full of lead.—

<sup>1</sup> Wanton.

Some wine, within there, and our viands!—Fortune knows  
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.

[Antony's approaching ruin is indicated by the fancied departure of the god Hercules, who personifies strength. The following scene contains an interesting example of Shakespeare's use of music.]

*Scene—the same. Before CLEOPATRA's palace*

*Enter a company of SOLDIERS.*

FIRST SOLDIER: Brother, good night: to-morrow is the day.

SECOND SOLDIER: It will determine one way: fare you well.  
Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?

FIRST SOLDIER: Nothing. What news?

SECOND SOLDIER: Belike 'tis but a rumour. Good night to you.

FIRST SOLDIER: Well, sir, good night. . . .

*Music of the hautboys as under the stage.*

SECOND SOLDIER: Hark!

FIRST SOLDIER: Music i' the air.

SECOND SOLDIER: Under the earth.

FIRST SOLDIER: It signs well, does it not?

SECOND SOLDIER: No.

FIRST SOLDIER: Peace, I say!

What should this mean?

SECOND SOLDIER: 'Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony loved,  
Now leaves him.

FIRST SOLDIER: Walk; let's see if other watchmen  
Do hear what we do.

[The full effect of Antony's flight from the fleet is now apparent. His ships have surrendered, and his legions have gone over to the enemy.]

*Scene—Ground between the two camps*

ANTONY: All is lost;  
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me:  
My fleet hath yielded to the foe; and yonder  
They cast their caps up, and carouse together  
Like friends long lost.—Triple-turned whore! 'tis thou



Hast sold me to this novice; and my heart  
Makes only wars on thee. . . .

O Sun, thy uprise shall I see no more:  
Fortune and Antony part here; even here  
Do we shake hands. All come to this? The hearts  
That spanieled me at heels, to whom I gave  
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets  
On blossoming Cæsar; and this pine is barked,  
That overtopped them all. Betrayed I am:  
O this false soul of Egypt! this grave charm,—  
Whose eye becked forth my wars, and called them home;  
Whose bosom was my crownnet, my chief end,—  
Like a right gipsy, hath, at fast and loose,  
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.—  
What, Eros, Eros!

*Enter CLEOPATRA.*

Ah, thou spell! Avaunt!

CLEOPATRA: Why is my lord enraged against his love?

ANTONY: Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving,  
And blemish Cæsar's triumph. Let him take thee,  
And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians:  
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot  
Of all thy sex; most monster-like, be shown  
For poor'st diminutives, for doits; and let  
Patient Octavia plough thy visage up  
With her preparéd nails. (*Exit CLEOPATRA.*)

'Tis well th'art gone.

[Cleopatra, hoping to win Antony back, has retired to the monument, sending her attendant, Mardian, to tell Antony that she has killed herself.]

*Scene—A room in CLEOPATRA's palace*

*Enter ANTONY and EROS, a soldier in attendance on ANTONY.*

ANTONY: I made these wars for Egypt and the queen,  
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine;  
Which, whilst it was mine, had annexed unto't  
A million more, now lost,—she, Eros, has







[Cleopatra has arranged with one of the guards to fetch a countryman, who will bring her a poisonous viper concealed in a basket.]

*Scene—A room in the monument*

*Enter CLOWN bringing in a basket. CHARMIAN in waiting.*

CLEOPATRA: Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,  
That kills and pains not?

CLOWN: Truly I have him: but I would not be the party that should desire you to touch him, for his biting is immortal; those that do die of it do seldom or never recover.

CLEOPATRA: Remember'st thou any that have died on't?

CLOWN: Very many, men and women too. I heard of one of them no longer than yesterday: a very honest woman, but something given to lie; as a woman should not do, but in the way of honesty: how she died of the biting of it, what pain she felt,—truly, she makes a very good report o' the worm; but he that will believe all that they say shall never be saved by half that they do: but this is most fallible, the worm's an odd worm.

CLEOPATRA: Get thee hence; farewell.

CLOWN: I wish you all joy of the worm. (*Sets down his basket.*)

CLEOPATRA: Well, get thee gone; farewell.

CLOWN: Yes, forsooth; I wish you joy o' the worm. (*Exit.*)

*Enter IRAS, with a robe, crown, etc.*

CLEOPATRA: Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have  
Immortal longings in me: now no more  
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip:—  
Yare, yare, good Iras; quick.—Methinks I hear  
Antony call; I see him rouse himself  
To praise my noble act; I hear him mock  
The luck of Cæsar, which the gods give men  
To excuse their after wrath:—husband, I come:  
Now to that name my courage prove my title!  
I am fire and air; my other elements  
I give to baser life . . .

Come, thou mortal wretch,

(*To an asp, which she applies to her breast*)

With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate  
Of life at once untie: poor venomous fool,  
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,  
That I might hear thee call great Cæsar ass  
Unpoliced!

CHARMIAN: O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA: Peace, peace!  
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,  
That sucks the nurse asleep?

CHARMIAN: O, break! O, break!

CLEOPATRA: As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle,—  
O Antony!—Nay, I will take thee too:—

(*Applying another asp to her arm*)

What should I stay—(*Dies*).

•CHARMIAN: In this vile world?—So, fare thee well.—  
Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies  
A lass unparalleled.—Downy windows,<sup>1</sup> close;  
And golden Phœbus never be beheld  
Of eyes again so royal!—Your crown's awry;  
I'll mend it, and then play.

*Enter the GUARD, rushing in.*

FIRST GUARD: Where is the queen?

CHARMIAN: Speak softly, wake her not.

*From Antony and Cleopatra.*

<sup>1</sup> I.e., eye-lids (see footnote on p. 205).



## II

### THE HUMAN COMEDY

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## THE FALSTAFF SAGA

[In the plays in which Sir John Falstaff appears we have pictures of contemporary (i.e. Elizabethan) England, but Falstaff is universal. He is one of Shakespeare's most wonderful creations. Though a complicated figure, he is a very real person; for there is something of him in all of us. He is the old Adam, the young adventurer, the child who will never grow up, the Lord of Misrule. An eighteenth-century critic has described him as "a knave without malice, a liar without deceit." He seems able to defy not only the laws of England but also the facts of life; and when his lies are discovered he still glories in his wit, while adjusting himself readily to the new situation. He makes his first appearance in the *First Part of King Henry IV*. His robust career carries him through the *Second Part*, and he dies in *King Henry V*. It is true that he comes to life again later on in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; but there he is but a shadow of himself, or rather quite a different and less interesting character.]

*Scene—Rochester. An inn yard*

*Enter a CARRIER with a lantern in his hand.*

FIRST CARRIER: Heigh-ho! an't be not four by the day, I'll be hanged: Charles' wain is over the new chimney, and yet our horse not packed.—What, ostler!

OSTLER (*sleepily within*): Anon, anon.

FIRST CARRIER: I prithee, Tom, beat Cut's saddle, put a few flocks in the point; poor jade is wrung in the withers, out of all cess.

*Enter another CARRIER.*

SECOND CARRIER: Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog, and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots: this house is turned upside down since Robin Ostler died.

FIRST CARRIER: Poor fellow never joyed since the price of oats rose; it was the death of him . . . What, ostler! come away and be hanged! come away.

SECOND CARRIER: I have a gammon of bacon and two razes<sup>1</sup> of ginger, to be delivered as far as Charing-cross.

<sup>1</sup> Roots.

FIRST CARRIER: God's body! the turkeys in my pannier are quite starved.—What, ostler!—A plague on thee! hast thou never an eye in thy head? canst not hear? An 'twere not as good deed as drink, to break the pate on thee, I am a very villain.—Come, and be hanged!—hast no faith in thee?

*Enter GADSHILL, a highwayman.*

GADSHILL: Good morrow, carriers. What's o'clock?

FIRST CARRIER: I think it be two o'clock.

GADSHILL: I prithee, lend me thy lantern, to see my gelding in the stable.

FIRST CARRIER: Nay, by God, soft; I know a trick worth two of that, i' faith.

GADSHILL: I pray thee, lend me thine.

SECOND CARRIER: Ay, when? canst tell?—Lend me thy lantern, quoth he?—marry, I'll see thee hanged first.

GADSHILL: Sirrah, carrier, what time do you mean to come to London?

SECOND CARRIER: Time enough to go to bed with a candle, I warrant thee.—(*Aside*) Come, neighbour Mugs, we'll call up the gentlemen: they will along with company, for they have great charge. (*Exeunt CARRIERS.*)

[Travellers carrying 300 marks in gold set out on their journey from the inn, and Prince Henry and Poins joined Gadshill, Falstaff, Bardolph and Peto, who had planned to relieve the travellers of their treasure. The Prince and Poins, who took their stand at another part of the road, disguised themselves and fell upon the others after the robbery. Falstaff and his companions ran away, abandoning their booty, which the Prince and Poins have now brought to London.]

*Scene—The Boar's-Head tavern in Eastcheap*<sup>1</sup>

*Present: PRINCE HENRY*<sup>2</sup> *and FRANCIS, a drawer.*

POINS (*within*): Francis!

PRINCE: Away, you rogue! dost thou not hear them call?

*Here they both call him; the drawer stands amazed, not knowing which way to go. Enter VINTNER.*

<sup>1</sup> A famous tavern in Shakespeare's time.

<sup>2</sup> It is evident from the text that the Prince is not quite sober.

VINTNER: What, stand'st thou still, and hear'st such a calling? Look to the guests within. (*Exit FRANCIS.*) My lord, old Sir John, with half a dozen more, are at the door: shall I let them in?

PRINCE: Let them alone awhile, and then open the door. Poins! (*Exit VINTNER.*)

POINS (*entering*): Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE: Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves are at the door: shall we be merry?

POINS: As merry as crickets, my lad . . .

FRANCIS *hurries past carrying drink.*

PRINCE: What's o'clock, Francis?

FRANCIS (*within*): Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE: That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is up-stairs and downstairs; his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning. I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the north; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, "Fie upon this quiet life! I want work." "O my sweet Harry," says she, "how many hast thou kill'd to-day?" "Give my roan horse a drench," says he; and answers, "Some fourteen," an hour after,—"a trifle, a trifle." I prithee, call in Falstaff: I'll play Percy, and that damned brawn<sup>1</sup> shall play Dame Mortimer his wife. "Rivo," says the drunkard. Call in Ribs, call in Tallow.

*Enter FALSTAFF, GADSHILL, BARDOLPH, and PETO, followed by FRANCIS with wine. FALSTAFF, taking no heed of PRINCE and POINS, sits wearily at a table.*

POINS: Welcome, Jack: where hast thou been?

FALSTAFF (*to himself*): A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too! Marry, and amen! Give me a cup of sack, boy. Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether-stocks, and mend them, and foot them too. A plague of all cowards! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant? (*Drinks.*)

PRINCE: Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter (pitiful-hearted Titan!) that melted at the sweet tale of the sun's? if thou didst, then behold that compound.

<sup>1</sup> "Boar fattened for the table" (*O.E.D.*).

FALSTAFF (*giving FRANCIS the empty cup*): You rogue, here's lime in this sack too; there is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man: yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it. A villainous coward! Go thy ways, old Jack; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not three good men unchanged in England; and one of them is fat, and grows old: God help the while! a bad world, I say, I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or any thing. A plague of all cowards, I say still.

PRINCE: How now, wool-sack! what mutter you?

FALSTAFF (*rounds upon him*): A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild-geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales!

PRINCE: Why, you whoreson round man! what's the matter?

FALSTAFF: Are not you a coward! answer me to that—and Poin there?

POINS: Zounds! ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, by the Lord, I'll stab thee. (*He draws his dagger.*)

FALSTAFF: I call thee coward! I'll see thee damned ere I call thee coward; but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back: call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing! give me them that will face me. (*To FRANCIS*) Give me a cup of sack: I am a rogue, if I drunk to-day.

PRINCE: O villain! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkest last.

FALSTAFF: All's one for that. (*Drinks.*) A plague of all cowards, still say I.

PRINCE: What's the matter?

FALSTAFF: What's the matter! there be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this day morning.

PRINCE: Where is it, Jack? where is it?

FALSTAFF: Where is it! taken from us it is; a hundred upon poor four of us.

PRINCE: What, a hundred, man?

FALSTAFF: I am a rogue, if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose, my buckler cut through and through, my sword hacked like a hand-saw—*ecce signum!* (*He draws it.*) I never dealt better since I was a man: all would not do. A plague of all cowards! Let them speak. If they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

PRINCE: Speak, sirs; how was it?

GADSHILL: We four set upon some dozen—

FALSTAFF: Sixteen, at least, my lord.

GADSHILL: And bound them.

PETO: No, no, they were not bound.

FALSTAFF: You rogue, they were bound, every man of them; or I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew.

GADSHILL: As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us—

FALSTAFF: And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.

PRINCE: What, fought you with them all?

FALSTAFF: All! I know not what you call all; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish: if there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature.

PRINCE: Pray God, you have not murdered some of them.

FALSTAFF: Nay, that's past praying for: I have peppered two of them; two, I am sure, I have paid; two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward; here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me,—

PRINCE: What, four? thou said'st but two even now.

FALSTAFF: Four, Hal; I told thee four.

POINS: Ay, ay, he said four.

FALSTAFF: These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado, but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

PRINCE: Seven? why, there were but four even now.

FALSTAFF: In buckram?

POINS: Ay, four in buckram suits.

FALSTAFF: Seven, by these hilts, or I am a villain else.

PRINCE (*aside*): Prithee, let him alone; we shall have more anon.

FALSTAFF: Dost thou hear me, Hal?

PRINCE: Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.

FALSTAFF: Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram, that I told thee of,—

PRINCE (*aside*): So, two more already.

FALSTAFF: Their points being broken,—

POINS: Down fell their hose.

FALSTAFF: Began to give me ground: but I followed me close, came in foot and hand; and with a thought, seven of the eleven I paid.

PRINCE (*aside*): O monstrous! eleven buckram men grown out of two!

FALSTAFF: But, as the devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back, and let drive at me;—for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

• PRINCE: These lies are like their father that begets them—gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou whoreson, obscene, greasy tallow-catch—

FALSTAFF: What, art thou mad? art thou mad? is not the truth the truth?

PRINCE: Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green, when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? Come, tell us your reason. What sayest thou to this?

POINS: Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.

• FALSTAFF: What, upon compulsion? Zounds, an I were at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! if reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.

PRINCE: I'll be no longer guilty of this sin (*points*). This sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horseback-breaker, this huge hill of flesh—

• FALSTAFF: 'Sblood, you starveling, you eel-skin,<sup>1</sup> you dried neat's-

<sup>1</sup> Following Hanmer (Globe ed. has "elf-skin", following Quartos and Folios).

tongue, you bull's-pizzle, you stock-fish! O for breath to utter what is like thee!—you tailor's-yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing tuck,—

PRINCE: Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again: and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

POINS: Mark, Jack.

PRINCE: We two saw you four set on four, and bound them and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four; and, with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and have it; yea, and can show it you here in the house: and, Falstaff, you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy, and still run and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight! What trick, what device, what starting-hole, canst thou now find out, to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?

POINS: Come, let's hear, Jack—what trick hast thou now?

FALSTAFF (*solemnly*): By the Lord, I knew ye, as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters—was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules: but beware instinct—the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter—I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee, during my life; I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money.—Hostess, (*Addressing MISTRESS QUICKLY, within*) clap to the doors. Watch to-night, pray to-morrow.—Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry? shall we have a play extempore?

PRINCE: Content—and the argument shall be thy running away.

FALSTAFF: Ah! no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me . . .

PRINCE: Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

FALSTAFF: Depose me? if thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-sucker, or a poulter's hare.

PRINCE: Well, here I am set.

FALSTAFF: And here I stand—judge, my masters.

PRINCE: Now, Harry, whence come you?

FALSTAFF: My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

PRINCE: The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

FALSTAFF: 'Sblood, my lord, they are false: (*Aside*) nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i' faith.

• PRINCE: Swearest thou, ungracious boy? henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace: there is a devil haunts thee, in the likeness of an old fat man,—a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? wherein neat and cleanly,<sup>1</sup> but to carve a capon and eat it? wherein cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, but in villainy? wherein villainous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing?

FALSTAFF: I would your Grace would take me with you. Whom means your Grace?

PRINCE: That villainous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

FALSTAFF: My lord, the man I know.

PRINCE: I know thou dost.

FALSTAFF: But to say I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old, the more the pity—his white hairs do witness it—but that he is, saving your reverence, a whoremaster, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked! if to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damned: if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord—banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins; but, for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company: banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

<sup>1</sup> Deft.



[Henry IV has to defend his kingdom against Percy (Hotspur), who has been joined by the Scots and by Welsh rebels; and Prince Henry is now under orders to march with his followers to Bridgenorth, where the king's forces are assembling.]

*Scene—The Boar's-Head tavern*

*Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH.*

FALSTAFF: Bardolph, am I not fallen away vilely since this last action? do I not bate? do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown; I am withered like an old apple-john. Well, I'll repent, and that suddenly, while I am in some liking; I shall be out of heart shortly, and then I shall have no strength to repent. An I have not forgotten what the inside of a church is made of, I am a pepper-corn, a brewer's horse. The inside of a church! Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me.

BARDOLPH: Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

- FALSTAFF: Why, there is it: come, sing me a bawdy song; make me merry. I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be; virtuous enough; swore little, diced not above seven times a week, went to a bawdy-house not above once in a quarter—of an hour; paid money that I borrowed—three or four times, lived well, and in good compass; and now I live out of all order, out of all compass.

BARDOLPH: Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be out of all compass, out of all reasonable compass, Sir John.

FALSTAFF: Do thou amend thy face, and I'll amend my life: thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop—but 'tis in the nose of thee: thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp.

BARDOLPH: Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm.

FALSTAFF: No, I'll be sworn—I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a death's head or a *memento mori*. I never see thy face, but I think upon hell-fire, and Dives that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be, "By this fire, that's God's angel." But thou art altogether given over; and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou ran'st up Gads Hill in the night to catch my horse, if

I did not think thou hadst been an *ignis fatuus* or a ball of wildfire, there's no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern: but the sack that thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire any time this two and thirty years, God reward me for it!

BARDOLPH: 'Sblood, I would my face were in your belly!

FALSTAFF: God-a-mercy! So should I be sure to be heart-burned.

*Enter* HOSTESS.

How now, Dame Partlet the hen! have you inquired yet who picked my pocket?

HOSTESS: Why, Sir John, what do you think, Sir John? Do you think I keep thieves in my house? I have searched, I have inquired, so has my husband, man by man, boy by boy, servant by servant. The tithe of a hair was never lost in my house before.

FALSTAFF: You lie, hostess—Bardolph was shaved, and lost many a hair; and I'll be sworn my pocket was picked. Go to, you are a woman, go.

HOSTESS: Who, I? No; I defy thee: God's light, I was never called so in mine own house before.

FALSTAFF: Go to, I know you well enough.

HOSTESS: No, Sir John; you do not know me, Sir John. I know you, Sir John. You owe me money, Sir John; and now you pick a quarrel to beguile me of it. I bought you a dozen of shirts to your back.

FALSTAFF: Dowlas, filthy dowlas. I have given them away to bakers' wives. They have made bolters<sup>1</sup> of them.

HOSTESS: Now, as I am a true woman, holland of eight shillings an ell! You owe money here besides, Sir John, for your diet, and by-drinkings, and money lent you, four-and-twenty pound.

FALSTAFF: He had his part of it: let him pay.

HOSTESS: He? alas! he is poor; he hath nothing.

FALSTAFF: Now! poor? look upon his face; what call you rich? let them coin his nose, let them coin his cheeks. I'll not pay a denier.

<sup>1</sup> Sieves.

What, will you make a younker of me? shall I not take mine ease in mine inn but I shall have my pocket picked? I have lost a sealing of my grandfather's worth forty mark.

HOSTESS: O Jesu! I have heard the prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper.

FALSTAFF: How! the prince is a Jack, a sneak-up.<sup>1</sup> 'Sblood, an he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog, if he would say so.

*Enter the PRINCE and POINS, marching, and FALSTAFF meets them, playing on his truncheon like a fife.*

How now, lad! is the wind in that door, i' faith? must we all march?

BARDOLPH: Yes, two and two, Newgate fashion . . .<sup>2</sup>

PRINCE: I have procured thee, Jack, a charge of foot.

FALSTAFF: I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? O for a fine thief, of the age of two-and-twenty or thereabouts! I am heinously unprovided. Well, God be thanked for these rebels, they offend none but the virtuous: I laud them, I praise them.

PRINCE: Bardolph!

BARDOLPH: My lord!

PRINCE: Go bear this letter to lord John of Lancaster, to my brother John; this to my lord of Westmorland. (*Exit BARDOLPH.*)

Go, Poins, to horse, to horse; for thou and I

Have thirty miles to ride yet ere dinner time— (*Exit POINS.*)

Jack, meet me to-morrow in the Temple hall

At two o'clock in the afternoon:

There shalt thou know thy charge, and there receive  
Money, and order for their furniture.

The land is burning; Percy stands on high,  
And either we or they must lower lie. (*Exit.*)

FALSTAFF: Rare words! brave world! Hostess, my breakfast, come!  
O, I could wish this tavern were my drum!

<sup>1</sup> Following N.S. (Globe has "sneak-cup").

<sup>2</sup> "As prisoners are conveyed to Newgate, fastened two and two together" (Johnson).

*Scene—The KING's camp near Shrewsbury*

*Present: PRINCE HENRY and FALSTAFF.*

FALSTAFF: Hal, if thou see me down in the battle and bestride me, so, 'tis a point of friendship.

PRINCE: Nothing but a colossus can do thee that friendship. Say thy prayers, and farewell.

FALSTAFF: I would 'twere bed-time, Hal, and all well.

PRINCE: Why, thou owest God a death. (*Exit.*)

• FALSTAFF: 'Tis not due yet; I would be loth to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on? how then? Can honour set to a leg? no; or an arm? no; or take away the grief of a wound? no. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? no. What is honour? a word. What is in that word honour? what is that honour? air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no. Doth he hear it? no. 'Tis insensible, then? yea, to the dead. But still it will not live with the living? no. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore, I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon—and so ends my catechism.

*Scene—Gloucestershire. Before JUSTICE SHALLOW's house*

*Present: FALSTAFF with SHALLOW and SILENCE, two country Justices.*

FALSTAFF: I am glad to see you, by my troth, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW: O, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's field?

FALSTAFF: No more of that, good Master Shallow, no more of that.

SHALLOW: Ha! 'twas a merry night. And is Jane Nightwork alive?

FALSTAFF: She lives, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW: She never could away with me.

FALSTAFF: Never, never; she would always say she could not abide Master Shallow.

SHALLOW: By the mass, I could anger her to the heart. She was then a bona-roba.<sup>1</sup> Doth she hold her own well?

<sup>1</sup> High-class courtesan (Ital., *buona roba* = "good stuff").

FALSTAFF: Old, old, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW: Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but be old; certain she's old; and had Robin Nightwork by old Nightwork before I came to Clement's Inn.

SILENCE: That's fifty-five year ago.

SHALLOW: Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen!—Ha, Sir John, said I well?

FALSTAFF: We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW: That we have, that we have, that we have<sup>1</sup>—in faith, Sir John, we have. Our watchword was "Hem, boys!"—Come, let's to dinner; come, let's to dinner.—Jesus, the days that we have seen!—Come, come.

[War has been declared against France. Henry V is about to sail from Southampton, and will capture Harfleur and win the Battle of Agincourt. Pistol, Nym, and Bardolph will follow the King, and the bridge at Staines, to which their women-folk will accompany them, is the first stage on the Southampton road. Falstaff will not fight again.]

*Scene—London. Before a tavern*

*Enter* PISTOL, HOSTESS,<sup>2</sup> NYM, BARDOLPH, *and* BOY.

HOSTESS: Prithee, honey-sweet husband, let me bring thee to Staines.

PISTOL: No; for my manly heart doth yearn.

Bardolph, be blithe; Nym, rouse thy vaunting veins;  
Boy, bristle thy courage up; for Falstaff he is dead,  
And we must yearn therefore.

BARDOLPH: Would I were with him, wheresome'er he is, either in heaven or hell!

HOSTESS: Nay, sure, he's not in hell: he's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom. 'A made a finer end, and went away, an it had been any christom child; 'a parted e'en just between twelve and one, e'en at the turning o' the tide: for after I saw him

<sup>1</sup> Note the rhythm of the chimes in the repetition of the word "have"—a master touch. The beautiful belfry at Evesham, in Shallow's neighbourhood, was erected about thirty years before Shakespeare's birth.

<sup>2</sup> This is "Mrs Quickly," now married to Pistol.

fumble with the sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his fingers' ends, I knew there was but one way; for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and 'a babbled of green fields.<sup>1</sup> "How now, Sir John," quoth I: "what, man, be o' good cheer!" So 'a cried out "God, God, God!" three or four times. Now I, to comfort him, bid him 'a should not think of God: I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet. So 'a bade me lay more clothes on his feet. I put out my hand into the bed, and felt them, and they were as cold as any stone; then I felt to his knees, and so upward and upward, and all was as cold as any stone.

NYM: They say he cried out of sack.

HOSTESS: Ay, that 'a did.

BARDOLPH: And of women.

HOSTESS: Nay, that 'a did not.

BOY: Yes, that 'a did; and said they were devils incarnate.

HOSTESS: 'A could never abide carnation—'twas a colour he never liked.

BOY: 'A said once, the devil would have him about women.

HOSTESS: 'A did in some sort, indeed, handle women; but then he was rheumatic, and talked of the whore of Babylon.

BOY: Do you not remember, 'a saw a flea stick upon Bardolph's nose, and 'a said it was a black soul burning in hell-fire?

BARDOLPH: Well, the fuel is gone that maintained that fire: that's all the riches I got in his service.

NYM: Shall we shog? the king will be gone from Southampton.

PISTOL: Come, let's away.

From *King Henry IV, Parts I and II* and *King Henry V*.

<sup>1</sup> "and . . . green fields." This famous emendation is due to Theobald (1726). First Folio has "and a Table of greene fields," evidently an error of the printer in reading his MS. Professor Dover Wilson suggests (*N.S.*) that Shakespeare wished to hint that Falstaff repeated in his delirium the 23rd Psalm, got by heart in the days when he ruined his voice in "singing of anthems."

## CHARGING THE WATCH

*Scene—A street in Messina*

*Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES with the WATCH.*

DOGBERRY: Are you good men and true?

VERGES: Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

DOGBERRY: Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

VERGES: Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

DOGBERRY: First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

FIRST WATCH: Hugh Otecake, sir, or George Seacole; for they can write and read.

DOGBERRY: Come hither, neighbour Seacole. God hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

SECOND WATCH: Both which, master constable,—

DOGBERRY: You have: I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

SECOND WATCH: How if 'a will not stand?

DOGBERRY: Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERGES: If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

DOGBERRY: True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and to talk, is most tolerable and not to be endured.

WATCH: We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch.

DOGBERRY: Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

WATCH: How if they will not?

DOGBERRY: Why, then, let them alone till they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

WATCH: Well, sir.

- DOGBERRY: If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

WATCH: If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

- DOGBERRY: Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

VERGES: You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

DOGBERRY: Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

VERGES: If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

WATCH: How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

DOGBERRY: Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.

VERGES: 'Tis very true.

DOGBERRY: This is the end of the charge:—you, constable, are to present the prince's own person: if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

VERGES: Nay, by'r lady, that I think 'a cannot.

DOGBERRY: Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him: marry, not without the prince be willing;



for indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

VERGES: By'r lady, I think it be so.

DOGBERRY: Ha, ah, ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own; and good night. Come, neighbour.

WATCH: Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

DOGBERRY: One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu: be vigilant, I beseech you.

*From Much Ado About Nothing.*

## • LEAVING HOME

[Launce is the servant of Proteus, one of the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," who has just embarked at Verona for Milan. Panthino, servant of Proteus' father, has been sent to tell Launce that his master is already "shipped." This passage has a special interest as evidence of Shakespeare's knowledge of everyday life in Italy in his time. We sometimes hear complaints of our author's ignorance of geography; and Dr. Johnson (in a note on this play) accuses him of ignorance and negligence because he "conveys his heroes by sea from one inland town to another." Actually, the rivers and canals of northern Italy were the normal routes of travel. Shakespeare's contemporary Coryat relates that he saw the citizens of Padua "pass back and forth in a barque down the river [Brenta] from Padua to Venice" (*Crudities*, 1611). Thus, in *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia, when sending Balthazar from Belmont to Padua, tells him to make use of "the common ferry which trades to Venice." This he would find at Fusina, where the Brenta enters the lagoon.]

*Scene—Verona. A street*

*Enter LAUNCE, leading a dog.*

LAUNCE: Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping; all the kind of the Launces have this very fault. I have received my proportion, like the prodigious son, and am going with Sir Proteus to

the imperial's court. I think Crab my dog to be the sourest-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity, yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear: he is a stone, a very pebble-stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog: a Jew would have wept to have seen our parting; why, my grandam, having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting. . . . Now come I to my sister: mark the moan she makes. Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear, nor speaks a word: but see how I lay the dust with my tears.

*Enter PANTHINO.*

PANTHINO: Launce, away, away, aboard! thy master is shipped and thou art to post after with oars. What's the matter? why weepest thou, man? Away, ass! you'll lose the tide, if you tarry any longer.

LAUNCE: It is no matter if the tied were lost; for it is the unkindest tied that ever any man tied.

PANTHINO: What's the unkindest tide?

LAUNCE: Why, he that's tied here—Crab, my dog.

PANTHINO: Tut, man, I mean thou'lt lose the flood: and, in losing the flood, lose thy voyage; and, in losing thy voyage, lose thy master; and, in losing thy master, lose thy service; and, in losing thy service—why dost thou stop my mouth?

LAUNCE: For fear thou shouldst lose thy tongue.

PANTHINO: Where should I lose my tongue?

LAUNCE: In thy tale.

PANTHINO: In thy tail!

LAUNCE: Lose the tide, and the voyage, and the master, and the service, and the tied! Why, man, if the river were dry, I am able to fill it with my tears; if the wind were down, I could drive the boat with my sighs.

PANTHINO: Come, come away, man; I was sent to call thee.

LAUNCE: Sir, call me what thou darest.

PANTHINO: Wilt thou go?

LAUNCE: Well, I will go. (*Exeunt.*)

*From The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

## BEATRICE AND BENEDICK

*Scene—Before the house of LEONATO, Governor of Messina*

*Enter LEONATO, HERO (his daughter), and BEATRICE (his niece), with a MESSENGER.*

BEATRICE (*addressing MESSENGER*): I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars or no?

MESSENGER: I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEONATO: What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO: My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

MESSENGER: O, he's returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

BEATRICE: He set up his bills here in Messina, and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the birdbolt.—I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

LEONATO: Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESSENGER: He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEATRICE: You had musty victual, and he hath help to eat it: he is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

MESSENGER: And a good soldier too, lady.

BEATRICE: And a good soldier to a lady:—but what is he to a lord?

MESSENGER: A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEATRICE: It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man: but for the stuffing,—well, we are all mortal.

LEONATO: You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE: Alas, he gets nothing by that! In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let

him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. —Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

MESSENGER: Is't possible?

BEATRICE: Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

MESSENGER: I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEATRICE: No; an he were, I would burn my study.

*Scene—The same*

*(BENEDICT has returned from the wars.)*

BEATRICE: I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

BENEDICK: What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

BEATRICE: Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

BENEDICK: Then is courtesy a turncoat.—But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEATRICE: A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BENEDICK: God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall escape a predestinate scratched face.

BEATRICE: Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

BENEDICK: Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

BEATRICE: A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

BENEDICK: I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

BEATRICE: You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

*Scene—A room in LEONATO's house*

*(A marriage has now been arranged between COUNT CLAUDIO and BEATRICE's cousin HERO.)*

DON PEDRO: Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won: I have broke with her father, and, his good-will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

LEONATO: Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

BEATRICE: Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

CLAUDIO: Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much.—Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

BEATRICE: Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

DON PEDRO: In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE: Yes, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care,—My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO: And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE: Good Lord, for alliance!—Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt; I may sit in a corner, and cry "Heigh-ho for a husband!"<sup>1</sup>

DON PEDRO: Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE: I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

DON PEDRO: Will you have me, lady?

• BEATRICE: No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days: your grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your grace, pardon me: I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

DON PEDRO: Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEATRICE: No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born.—Cousins, God give you joy!

<sup>1</sup> The title of an old ballad (Malone).

*Scene—LEONATO's orchard*

*Enter BENEDICK alone.*

BENEDICK: I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile a-foot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet . . . May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. . . . Ha, the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.  
*(Withdraws into the arbour.)*

*Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, LEONATO, BALTHAZAR and MUSICIANS.*

DON PEDRO: Come, shall we hear this music?

CLAUDIO: Yea, my good lord.—How still the evening is,  
As hushed on purpose to grace harmony!

DON PEDRO: See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

CLAUDIO: O, very well, my lord: the music ended,  
We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth.

DON PEDRO: Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again . . .

*•Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,  
Men were deceivers ever;  
One foot in sea, and one on shore;  
To one thing constant never!  
Then sigh not so,  
But let them go,  
And be you blithe and bonny;  
Converting all your sounds of woe  
Into Hey nonny, nonny.*

*Exeunt BALTHAZAR and MUSICIANS.*

DON PEDRO: Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day,—that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO: O, ay:—stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits (*aside to PEDRO*).—I never did think that lady would have loved any man.

LEONATO: No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

BENEDICK (*aside*): Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

LEONATO: By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it: but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the infinite of thought.

DON PEDRO: May be she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUDIO: Faith, like enough.

LEONATO: O God, counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

DON PEDRO: Why, what effects of passion shows she?

CLAUDIO (*aside*): Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

LEONATO: What effects, my lord!—She will sit you,—you heard my daughter tell you how.

CLAUDIO: She did indeed.

DON PEDRO: How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

LEONATO: I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

BENEDICK (*aside*): I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence . . .

DON PEDRO (*aside*): Let there be the same net spread for her: and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

*Exeunt DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO and LEONATO.*

BENEDICK (*coming forward*): This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. . . . Shall quips and sentences and these paper-bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? no, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.—Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

*Enter BEATRICE.*

BEATRICE: Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENEDICK: Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE: I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful I would not have come.

BENEDICK: You take pleasure, then, in the message?

BEATRICE: Yea, just as much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal.—You have no stomach, signior: fare you well. (*Exit.*)

BENEDICK: Ha! "Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner,"—there's a double meaning in that. "I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me,"—that's as much as to say, "Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks."—If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. (*Exit.*)

*Scene—A room in LEONATO's house*

*Present: LEONATO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK and others.*

*Enter the LADIES masked.*

BENEDICK: Soft and fair!—Which is Beatrice?

BEATRICE (*unmasking*): I answer to that name. What is your will?

BENEDICK: Do not you love me?

BEATRICE: Why, no; no more than reason.

BENEDICK: Why, then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

BEATRICE: Do not you love me?



BENEDICK: Troth, no; no more than reason.

BEATRICE: Why, then my cousin, Margaret and Ursula  
Are much deceived; for they did swear you did.

BENEDICK: They swore that you were almost sick for me.

BEATRICE: They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

BENEDICK: 'Tis no such matter.—Then you do not love me?

BEATRICE: No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

LEONATO: Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

CLAUDIO: And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her;  
For here's a paper, written in his hand,  
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,  
Fashioned to Beatrice.

HERO:                   And here's another,  
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,  
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENEDICK: A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts.—  
Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

BEATRICE: I would not deny you;—but, by this good day, I yield  
upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for I was told  
you were in a consumption.

BENEDICK: Peace! I will stop your mouth. (*Kissing her.*)

*From Much Ado about Nothing.*

## FUN IN ILLYRIA

[Sir Toby Belch and his boon companion Sir Andrew Aguecheek are residing with Sir Toby's niece, the countess Olivia. The lively Maria is the countess's maid and Malvolio her vain and pompous steward.]

### I. MIDNIGHT REVELS

*Scene—Olivia's House*

*Enter SIR TOBY and SIR ANDREW.*

SIR TOBY: Approach, Sir Andrew: not to be abed after midnight  
is to be up betimes; and *diluculo surgere*,<sup>1</sup> thou know'st,—

<sup>1</sup> A quotation from Lilly's *Latin Grammar*, 1513 (= "to get up at dawn").

SIR ANDREW: Nay, by my troth, I know not: but I know, to be up late is to be up late.

SIR TOBY: A false conclusion: I hate it as an unfilled can. To be up after midnight and to go to bed then, is early: so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes. Does not our life consist of the four elements?

SIR ANDREW: Faith, so they say; but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.

SIR TOBY: Thou'rt a scholar; let us therefore eat and drink. Marian, I say! a stoup of wine!

*Enter CLOWN.*

SIR ANDREW: Here comes the fool, i' faith.

CLOWN: How now, my hearts! did you never see the picture of "we three!"?

SIR TOBY: Welcome, ass! Now let's have a catch.

SIR ANDREW: By my troth, the fool has an excellent breast. I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg, and so sweet a breath to sing, as the fool has. In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Pigromitus, of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus: 'twas very good i' faith. I sent thee sixpence for thy leman: hadst it?

CLOWN: I did impetico thy gratillity; for Malvolio's nose is no whipstock; my lady has a white hand, and the Myrmidons<sup>2</sup> are no bottle-ale houses.

SIR ANDREW: Excellent! why, this is the best fooling, when all is done. Now, a song!

SIR TOBY: Come on; there is sixpence for you: let's have a song.

SIR ANDREW: There's a testril<sup>3</sup> of me too: if one knight give a—

CLOWN: Would you have a love-song, or a song of good life?

SIR TOBY: A love-song, a love-song.

SIR ANDREW: Ay, ay: I care not for good life.

<sup>1</sup> An inn-sign with two fools' heads, the spectator being supposed to make the third.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the name of a tavern well known to Shakespeare's audience.

<sup>3</sup> Small coin worth about sixpence in Shakespeare's time.

CLOWN (*sings*):

*O Mistress mine, where are you roaming?  
    O, stay and hear; your true love's coming,  
        That can sing both high and low:  
    Trip no further, pretty sweeting;  
    Journeys end in lovers meeting,  
        Every wise man's son doth know.*

SIR ANDREW: Excellent good, i' faith.

SIR TOBY: Good, good.

CLOWN (*sings*):

*What is love? 'tis not hereafter;  
    Present mirth hath present laughter;  
        What's to come is still unsure;  
    In delay there lies no plenty;  
    Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,  
        Youth's a stuff will not endure.*

SIR ANDREW: A mellifluous voice, as I am a true knight.

SIR TOBY: A contagious breath.

SIR ANDREW: Very sweet and contagious, i' faith.

SIR TOBY: To hear by the nose, it is dulcet in contagion. But shall we make the welkin dance indeed? shall we rouse the night-owl in a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver? shall we do that?

SIR ANDREW: An you love me, let's do't: I am a dog at a catch.

CLOWN: By'r lady, sir, and some dogs will catch well.

SIR ANDREW: Most certain. Let our catch be "Thou knave."

CLOWN: "Hold thy peace, thou knave," knight? I shall be constrained in't to call thee knave, knight.

SIR ANDREW: 'Tis not the first time I have constrained one to call me knave. Begin, fool; it begins "Hold thy peace."

CLOWN: I shall never begin if I hold my peace.

SIR ANDREW: Good, i' faith. Come, begin. (*They sing a catch.*)

*Enter MARIA.*

MARIA: What a caterwauling do you keep here! If my lady have not called up her steward Malvolio and bid him turn you out of doors, never trust me.

SIR TOBY: My lady's a Cataian<sup>1</sup>, we are politicians, Malvolio's a Peg-a-Ramsey, and "Three merry men be we." Am not I consanguineous? am I not of her blood? Tillyvally, Lady! (*Sings*) "*There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady!*"

CLOWN: Beshrew me, the knight's in admirable fooling.

SIR ANDREW: Ay, he does well enough if he be disposed, and so do I too: he does it with a better grace, but I do it more natural.

SIR TOBY (*sings*): "*O, the twelfth day of December*",—

MARIA: For the love o' God, peace!

*Enter MALVOLIO.*

MALVOLIO: My masters, are you mad? or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do ye make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers'<sup>2</sup> catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?

SIR TOBY: We did keep time, sir, in our catches. Sneek up!

MALVOLIO: Sir Toby, I must be round with you. My lady bade me tell you, that, though she harbours you as her kinsman, she's nothing allied to your disorders. If you can separate yourself and your misdemeanours, you are welcome to the house; if not, an it would please you to take leave of her, she is very willing to bid you farewell.

SIR TOBY: "*Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone.*"

MARIA: Nay, good Sir Toby.

CLOWN: "*His eyes do show his days are almost done.*"

MALVOLIO: Is't even so?

SIR TOBY: "*But I will never die.*"

CLOWN: Sir Toby, there you lie.

MALVOLIO: This is much credit to you.

SIR TOBY: "*Shall I bid him go?*"

CLOWN: "*What an if you do?*"

SIR TOBY: "*Shall I bid him go, and spare not?*"

CLOWN: *O no, no, no, no, you dare not.*"

<sup>1</sup> Chinese—native of Cathay—a cant term.

<sup>2</sup> Cobblers.

SIR TOBY: Out o' tune, sir: ye lie. Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

CLOWN: Yes, by Saint Anne, and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth too.

SIR TOBY: Thou'rt i' the right. Go, sir, rub your chain with crumbs. A stoup of wine, Maria!

MALVOLIO: Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favour at any thing more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule: she shall know of it, by this hand. (*Exit.*)

MARIA: Go shake your ears.

SIR ANDREW: 'T were as good a deed as to drink when a man's a-hungry, to challenge him the field, and then to break promise with him and make a fool of him.

SIR TOBY: Do't, knight: I'll write thee a challenge; or I'll deliver thy indignation to him by word of mouth.

MARIA: Sweet Sir Toby, be patient for to-night: since the youth of the count's was to-day with my lady, she is much out of quiet. For Monsieur Malvolio, let me alone with him: if I do not gull him into a nayword, and make him a common recreation, do not think I have wit enough to lie straight in my bed: I know I can do it . . . For this night, to bed, and dream on the event. Farewell. (*Exit.*)

SIR TOBY: Good night, Penthesilea.

SIR ANDREW: Pefore me, she's a good wench.

SIR TOBY: She's a beagle, true-bred, and one that adores me: what o' that?

SIR ANDREW: I was adored once too.

SIR TOBY: Let's to bed, knight. Thou hadst need send for more money.

SIR ANDREW: If I cannot recover your niece, I am a foul way out.

SIR TOBY: Send for money, knight: if thou hast her not i' the end, call me cut.

SIR ANDREW: If I do not, never trust me, take it how you will.

SIR TOBY: Come, come, I'll go burn some sack; 'tis too late to go to bed now: come, knight: come, knight.

## 2. TRAP IN A GARDEN

[Maria (who can imitate her mistress' hand) has written a love-letter to be placed in Malvolio's path. This expresses approval of yellow stockings—a colour Olivia abhors and cross-gartering—a fashion she detests.]

*Scene—OLIVIA's garden*

*Enter SIR TOBY, SIR ANDREW, MARIA and FABIAN, servant of OLIVIA.*

MARIA: Get ye all three into the box-tree: Malvolio's coming down this walk: he has been yonder i' the sun practising behaviour to his own shadow this half-hour: observe him, for the love of mockery; for I know this letter will make a contemplative idiot of him. Close, in the name of jesting! Lie thou there (*throws down a letter*); for here comes the trout, that must be caught with tickling. (*Exit.*)

*Enter MALVOLIO.*

MALVOLIO: 'Tis but fortune; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me: and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more exalted respect than any one else that follows her. What should I think on't?

SIR TOBY: Here's an overweening rogue!

FABIAN: O, peace! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him: how he jets<sup>1</sup> under his advanced plumes!

SIR ANDREW: 'Slight, I could so beat the rogue!

SIR TOBY: Peace, I say.

MALVOLIO: To be Count Malvolio,—

SIR TOBY: Ah, rogue!

SIR ANDREW: Pistol him, pistol him.

SIR TOBY: Peace, peace!

MALVOLIO: There is example for't; the lady of the Strachy<sup>2</sup> married the yeoman of the wardrobe.

SIR ANDREW: Fie on him, Jezebel!

<sup>1</sup> Struts.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps a corruption of some name. This lady has not been discovered by any commentator.

FABIAN: O, peace! now he's deeply in: look how imagination blows him.

MALVOLIO: Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state<sup>1</sup>,—

SIR TOBY: O, for a stone-bow, to hit him in the eye!

MALVOLIO: Calling my officers about me, in my branched<sup>2</sup> velvet gown; having come from a day-bed, where I have left Olivia sleeping,—

SIR TOBY: Fire and brimstone!

FABIAN: O, peace, peace!

MALVOLIO: And then to have the humour of state; and after a demure travel of regard,—telling them I know my place, as I would they should do theirs,—to ask for my kinsman Toby,—

SIR TOBY: Bolts and shackles!

FABIAN: O, peace, peace, peace! now, now.

MALVOLIO: Seven of my people, with an obedient start, make out for him: I frown the while; and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my—some rich jewel. Toby approaches; courtesies there to me,—

SIR TOBY: Shall this fellow live?

FABIAN: Though our silence be drawn from us with cars<sup>3</sup>, yet peace.

MALVOLIO: I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control,—

SIR TOBY: And does not Toby take you a blow o' the lips, then?

MALVOLIO: Saying, "Cousin Toby, my fortunes having cast me on your niece, give me this prerogative of speech,"—

SIR TOBY: What, what?

MALVOLIO: "You must amend your drunkenness."

SIR TOBY: Out, scab!

FABIAN: Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot.

MALVOLIO: "Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight,"—

<sup>1</sup> Chair of state, with canopy.

<sup>2</sup> "Adorned with a figured pattern in embroidery" (*O.E.D.*).

<sup>3</sup> Fabian means "though we should be torn asunder by chariots driven in opposite directions." Possibly a reference to Virgil (*Æneid*, VIII, 642).

SIR ANDREW: That's me, I warrant you.

MALVOLIO: "One Sir Andrew,"—

SIR ANDREW: I knew 'twas I; for many do call me fool.

MALVOLIO: What employment have we here? (*Taking up the letter.*)

FABIAN: Now is the woodcock near the gin.

SIR TOBY: O, peace! and the spirit of humours intimate reading aloud to him!

MALVOLIO: By my life, this is my lady's hand: these be her very C's, her U's, and her T's; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.

SIR ANDREW: Her C's, her U's, and her T's: why that?

MALVOLIO: (*reads*) *To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes.* Her very phrases!—By your leave, wax . . . (*Reads*) *If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I am above thee; but be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em. Thy Fates open their hands; let thy blood and spirit embrace them: and, to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, cast thy humble slough, and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity: she thus advises thee that sighs for thee. Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered: I say, remember. Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so; if not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch Fortune's fingers. Farewell. She that would alter services with thee,*

#### THE FORTUNATE-UNHAPPY.

Daylight and champagne discovers not more: this is open. I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance, I will be point-devise the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me: for every reason excites to this, that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered; and in this she manifests herself to my love, and, with a kind of injunction, drives me to these habits of her liking. I thank my stars, I am happy. I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings, and cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on. Jove and my stars be praised!



### 3. *MIDSUMMER MADNESS*

*Scene—OLIVIA's house*

*Present: SIR TOBY and FABIAN.*

SIR TOBY: Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes.

*Enter MARIA.*

MARIA: If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourselves into stitches, follow me. Yond gull Malvolio is turned heathen, a very renegado; for there is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness. He's in yellow stockings.

SIR TOBY: And cross-gartered?

MARIA: Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps a school i'th' church. I have dogged him, like his murderer. He does obey every point of the letter that I dropped to betray him: he does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map<sup>1</sup> with the augmentation of the Indies: you have not seen such a thing as 'tis: I can hardly forbear hurling things at him. I know my lady will strike him: if she do, he'll smile, and take't for a great favour.

SIR TOBY: Come, bring us, bring us where he is. (*Exeunt.*)

*Scene—OLIVIA's garden*

*Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.*

OLIVIA: Where is Malvolio?

MARIA: He's coming, madam; but in very strange manner. He is, sure, possessed, madam.

OLIVIA: Why, what's the matter? does he rave?

MARIA: No, madam, he does nothing but smile: your ladyship were best to have some guard about you, if he come; for, sure, the man is tainted in's wits.

<sup>1</sup> Evidently the map, dated 1600, drawn by Hakluyt and others. It showed the whole of the East Indies, and had a great many lines indicating the course of a ship. A reproduction of this map is published in *Shakespeare's England* (Oxford University Press, 1916).

OLIVIA: Go, call him hither. (*Exit MARIA.*)

*Re-enter MARIA with MALVOLIO.*

How now, Malvolio!

MALVOLIO: Sweet lady, ho, ho. (*Smiles fantastically.*)

OLIVIA: Smilest thou?

I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.

MALVOLIO: Sad, lady! I could be sad: this does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; but what of that? if it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is, "Please one, and please all."

OLIVIA: Why, how dost thou, man? what is the matter with thee?

MALVOLIO: Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed: I think we do know the sweet Roman hand.

OLIVIA: Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO: To bed! ay, sweet-heart; and I'll come to thee.

OLIVIA: God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so, and kiss thy hand so oft?

MARIA: How do you, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO: At your request! yes; nightingales answer daws.

MARIA: Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?

MALVOLIO: "Be not afraid of greatness";—'twas well writ.

OLIVIA: What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO: "Some are born great",—

OLIVIA: Ha!

MALVOLIO: "Some achieve greatness",—

OLIVIA: What sayest thou?

MALVOLIO: "And some have greatness thrust upon them."

OLIVIA: Heaven restore thee!

MALVOLIO: "Remember who commended thy yellow stockings".

OLIVIA: Thy yellow stockings!

MALVOLIO: "And wished to see thee cross-gartered".

OLIVIA: Cross-gartered!

MALVOLIO: "Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so".

OLIVIA: Am I made?

MALVOLIO: "If not, let me see thee a servant still."

OLIVIA: Why, this is very midsummer madness . . . Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby? Let some of my people have a special care of him: I would not have him mis-carry for the half of my dowry.

*Exeunt OLIVIA and MARIA.*

MALVOLIO: O, ho! do you come near me<sup>1</sup> now? no worse man than Sir Toby to look to me! This concurs directly with the letter . . .

*Re-enter MARIA, with SIR TOBY and FABIAN.*

SIR TOBY: Which way is he, in the name of sanctity? If all the devils of hell be drawn in little, and Legion himself possessed him, yet I'll speak to him.

FABIAN: Here he is, here he is. How is't with you, sir? how is't with you, man?

MALVOLIO: Go off; I discard you: let me enjoy my private: go off.

MARIA: Lo, how hollow the fiend speaks within him! did I not tell you? Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a care of him.

MALVOLIO: Ah, ha! does she so?

SIR TOBY: Go to, go to; peace, peace; we must deal gently with him: let him alone. How do you, Malvolio? how is't with you? What, man! defy the devil: consider he's an enemy to mankind.

MALVOLIO: Do you know what you say?

MARIA: La you, an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart! Pray God, he be not bewitched!

*From Twelfth Night.*

<sup>1</sup> *Come near* (one) = speak plainly.

## VENETIAN JUSTICE

[The Duke has appointed Bellario, a learned lawyer of Padua, to determine Shylock's suit on foot of Antonio's bond. Bellario is kinsman of Portia, who is married to Antonio's friend Bassanio, for whose benefit the bond was signed. Portia has arranged with Bellario to feign illness and send her (disguised as a young lawyer) to act as his substitute at the trial.]

### *Scene—Venice. A Court of Justice*

*Present: the DUKE, MAGNIFICOES, PORTIA, SHYLOCK, ANTONIO, also  
BASSANIO and GRATIANO, friends to ANTONIO, and others.*

PORTIA: Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

DUKE: Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

PORTIA: Is your name Shylock?

SHYLOCK: Shylock is my name.

PORTIA: Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

(To ANTONIO) You stand within his danger, do you not?

ANTONIO: Ay, so he says.

PORTIA: Do you confess the bond?

ANTONIO: I do.

PORTIA: Then must the Jew be merciful.

SHYLOCK: On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

•PORTIA: The quality of mercy is not strained,

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed:

It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest, it becomes

The thronéd monarch better than his crown:

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,

The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

But mercy is above this sceptred sway,

It is enthronéd in the hearts of kings,

It is an attribute to God himself,

And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore Jew,  
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
That in the course of justice none of us  
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy,  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much  
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,  
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

SHYLOCK: My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,  
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

PORTIA: Is he not able to discharge the money?

BASSANIO: Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;  
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,  
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.  
If this will not suffice, it must appear  
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,  
Wrest once the law to your authority:  
To do a great right, do a little wrong,  
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

PORTIA: It must not be: there is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree establish'd;  
'T will be recorded for a precedent,  
And many an error by the same example  
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

SHYLOCK: A Daniel<sup>1</sup> come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!  
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

PORTIA: I pray you let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK (*snatching a paper from his bosom*): Here 'tis, most  
reverend doctor, here it is.

PORTIA: Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.

SHYLOCK: An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven,  
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?  
No, not for Venice.

<sup>1</sup> Shylock is referring to the "young youth whose name was Daniel,"  
called upon to give judgment in the case of Susanna (*Apocrypha*).

PORTIA (*Perusing the paper*): Why, this bond is forfeit,  
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim  
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off  
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:  
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

SHYLOCK: When it is paid, according to the tenour.  
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;  
You know the law, your exposition  
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,  
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,  
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear,  
There is no power in the tongue of man  
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

ANTONIO: Most heartily I do beseech the court  
To give the judgment . . .

SHYLOCK: We trifle time; I pray thee, pursue sentence.

PORTIA: A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:  
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

SHYLOCK: Most rightful judge!

PORTIA: And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:  
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

SHYLOCK: Most learned judge!—A sentence! come, prepare!

PORTIA: Tarry a little; there is something else.  
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;  
The words expressly are "a pound of flesh":  
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;  
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed  
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods  
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate  
Unto the state of Venice . . . Tarry, Jew,  
The law hath yet another hold on you.  
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,  
If it be proved against an alien,  
That, by direct or indirect attempts,  
He seek the life of any citizen,  
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive  
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the State,  
And the offender's life lies in the mercy  
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.  
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;  
For it appears by manifest proceeding,  
That indirectly and directly too,  
Thou hast contrived against the very life  
Of the defendant, and thou hast incurred  
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.  
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

GRATIANO: Beg, that thou may'st have leave to hang thyself;  
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,  
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;  
Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's charge.

DUKE: That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,  
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.  
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's:  
The other half comes to the general State,  
Which humbleness may drive into a fine.

PORTIA: Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

SHYLOCK: Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:  
You take my house, when you do take the prop  
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,  
When you do take the means whereby I live.

PORTIA: What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

GRATIANO: A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

ANTONIO: So please my lord the Duke, and all the court,  
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content; so he will let me have  
The other half in use, to render it  
Upon his death unto the gentleman  
That lately stole his daughter:  
Two things provided more,—that, for this favour,  
He presently become a Christian;  
The other, that he do record a gift,  
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed  
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

DUKE: He shall do this, or else I do recant  
The pardon that I late pronouncéd here.

PORTIA: Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

SHYLOCK: I am content.

PORTIA: Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

SHYLOCK: I pray you give me leave to go from hence.

I am not well. Send the deed after me,

And I will sign it.

From *The Merchant of Venice*.

## THE BEST OF SHYLOCK

TUBAL: There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice . . . One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

SHYLOCK: Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

From *The Merchant of Venice*.

## MOONLIGHT AND MUSIC

[Shakespeare appears to have been especially interested in music; and he uses it so much in his plays that we are tempted to assume that he was fond of it. The reader will observe how various a part music is made to play. It is here at its highest, but elsewhere it may be merely the nourisher of love, either dreamy or frankly sexual. Thus Cleopatra calls it "the food of love," and so does Orsino (p. 228). It is associated with fairies in the *Dream* and the *Tempest* and with the idea of death in Gaunt's "dying speech" (p. 212); it is used in *Henry V* as a simile for the good government of a state (p. 223). It sounds under the earth as the doomed Antony is abandoned by the god (p. 41); it dominates one of the sonnets (p. 250) and in another (p. 259) "the Dark Lady" is described as the poet's music.]

*Scene—Belmont. Avenue to PORTIA's house*

*Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.*

LORENZO: The moon shines bright:—in such a night as this,  
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,  
And they did make no noise,—in such a night



Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls,  
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,  
Where Cressid lay that night.

JESSICA:                               In such a night  
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,  
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,  
And ran dismayed away

LORENZO:                               In such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft her love  
To come again to Carthage.

JESSICA:                               In such a night  
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Aeson.

LORENZO:                               In such a night  
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,  
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice  
As far as Belmont.

JESSICA:                               In such a night  
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,  
And ne'er a true one.

LORENZO:                               In such a night  
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

JESSICA: I would out-night you, did no body come:  
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

*Enter STEPHANO.*

LORENZO: Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

STEPHANO: A friend.

LORENZO: A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?

STEPHANO: Stepháno is my name; and I bring word  
My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont . . .

LORENZO: Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.  
And yet no matter:—why should we go in?—

My friend Stepháno, signify, I pray you,  
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;  
And bring your music forth into the air.

*Exit* STEPHANO.

• How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music  
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:  
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins,—  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter* MUSICIANS.

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn!  
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,  
And draw her home with music. (*Music plays.*)

JESSICA: I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

LORENZO: The reason is, your spirits are attentive:  
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud—  
Which is the hot condition of their blood—  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;  
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,  
But music for the time doth change his nature.  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;

The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted.—Mark the music!  
*From The Merchant of Venice.*

## AS THEY LIKED IT

### 1. NEWS

*Scene—Orchard of OLIVER's house*

*Present: OLIVER and CHARLES, the DUKE's wrestler.*

OLIVER: Good Monsieur Charles, what's the new news at the new court?

CHARLES: There's no news at the court, sir, but the old news: that is, the old duke is banished by his younger brother the new duke . . .

OLIVER: Where will the old duke live?

CHARLES: They say he is already in the forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England: they say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world.

### 2. PLANNING THE JOURNEY

*Scene—A room in the DUKE's palace*

*Present: ROSALIND and CELIA.*

ROSALIND: Whither shall we go?

CELIA: To seek my uncle in the forest of Arden.

ROSALIND: Alas, what danger will it be to us,  
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far?  
Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.

CELIA: I'll put myself in poor and mean attire  
And with a kind of umber smirch my face;  
The like do you: so shall we pass along  
And never stir assailants.

ROSALIND: Were it not better,  
Because that I am more than common tall,  
That I did suit me all points like a man?  
A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,  
A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart  
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,  
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,  
As many other mannish cowards have  
That do outface it with their semblances.

CELIA: What shall I call thee when thou art a man?

ROSALIND: I'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page;  
And therefore look you call me Ganymede.  
But what will you be called?

CELIA: Something that hath a reference to my state;  
No longer Celia, but Aliena.

ROSALIND: But, cousin, what if we assayed to steal  
The clownish fool out of your father's court?  
Would he not be a comfort to our travel?

CELIA: He'll go along o'er the wide world with me;  
Leave me alone to woo him. Let's away!

### 3. THE ARRIVAL

*Scene—The forest of Arden*

ROSALIND, *as GANYMEDE, clad as a boy in forester's dress, and*  
CELIA, *as ALIENA, clad as a shepherdess, together with TOUCH-*  
STONE, *approach slowly and fling themselves upon the ground*  
*under a tree.*

ROSALIND: O Jupiter, how weary are my spirits!

TOUCHSTONE: I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary.

ROSALIND: I could find it in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel  
and to cry like a woman; but I must comfort the weaker vessel, as  
doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat:  
therefore courage, good Aliena!

CELIA: I pray you, bear with me; I cannot go no further.

TOUCHSTONE: For my part, I had rather bear with you than bear you; yet I should bear no cross<sup>1</sup> if I did bear you, for I think you have no money in your purse.

ROSALIND: Well, this is the forest of Arden!

TOUCHSTONE: Ay, now am I in Arden; the more fool I; when I was at home, I was in a better place: but travellers must be content.

#### 4. A LESSON IN LOVE-MAKING<sup>2</sup>

*Scene—The same*

*Present: ROSALIND and ORLANDO.*

ROSALIND: Why, how now, Orlando! where have you been all this while! You a lover!—An you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more.

ORLANDO: My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise.

ROSALIND: Break an hour's promise in love! He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts, and break but a part of the thousandth part of a minute in the affairs of love, it may be said of him that Cupid hath clapped him o' th' shoulder, but I'll warrant him heart-whole.

ORLANDO: Pardon me, dear Rosalind.

ROSALIND: Nay, an you be so tardy, come no more in my sight: I had as lief be woo'd of a snail. Come, woo me, woo me; for now I am in a holiday humour, and like enough to consent.—What would you say to me now, an I were your very very Rosalind?

ORLANDO: I would kiss before I spoke.

• ROSALIND: Nay, you were better speak first; and when you were gravelled for lack of matter, you might take occasion to kiss. Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit; and for lovers, lacking (God warr'nt<sup>3</sup> us!) matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.

ORLANDO: How if the kiss be denied?

ROSALIND: Then she puts you to entreaty, and there begins new matter.

<sup>1</sup> Money, so called because stamped with a cross.

<sup>2</sup> This passage has been slightly abridged.

<sup>3</sup> Following *N.S.* (Globe has *warn*).

ORLANDO: Who could be out, being before his beloved mistress?

ROSALIND: Marry, that should you, if I were your mistress; or I should think my honesty ranker than my wit.

ORLANDO: What, of my suit?

ROSALIND: Not out of your apparel, and yet out of your suit. Am not I your Rosalind?

ORLANDO: I take some joy to say you are, because I would be talking of her.

ROSALIND: Well, in her person I say I will not have you.

ORLANDO: Then in mine own person I die.

ROSALIND: No, faith, die by attorney. The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, *videlicet*, in a love-cause. Troilus had his brains dashed out with a Grecian club; yet he did what he could to die before; and he is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have lived many a fair year, though Hero had turned nun, if it had not been for a hot midsummer night; for, good youth, he went but forth to wash him in the Hellespont, and, being taken with the cramp, was drowned: and the foolish chroniclers of that age found it was "Hero of Sestos." But these are all lies: men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not for love.

ORLANDO: I would not have my right Rosalind of this mind; for, I protest, her frown might kill me.

ROSALIND: By this hand, it will not kill a fly. But come, now I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition; and ask me what you will, I will grant it.

ORLANDO: But will my Rosalind do so?

ROSALIND: By my life, she will do as I do.

ORLANDO: O, but she is wise.

ROSALIND: Or else she could not have the wit to do this: the wiser, the waywarder; make the doors upon a woman's wit, and it will out at the casement; shut that, and 'twill out at the key-hole; stop that, 'twill fly with the smoke out at the chimney.

ORLANDO: For these two hours, Rosalind, I will leave thee.

ROSALIND: Alas, dear love, I cannot lack thee two hours!

ORLANDO: I must attend the duke at dinner: by two o'clock I will be with thee again.

ROSALIND: Ay, go your ways, go your ways! . . . That flattering tongue of yours won me. 'Tis but one cast away—and so, come death!—Two o'clock is your hour?

ORLANDO: Ay, sweet Rosalind.

ROSALIND: By my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend me, and by all pretty oaths that are not dangerous, if you break one jot of your promise, or come one minute behind your hour, I will think you the most pathetic break-promise, and the most hollow lover, and the most unworthy of her you call Rosalind, that may be chosen out of the gross band of the unfaithful: therefore beware my censure, and keep your promise.

ORLANDO: With no less religion than if thou wert indeed my Rosalind: so, adieu.

ROSALIND: Well, Time is the old justice that examines all such offenders, and let Time try: adieu!

From *As you Like It*.

## AN UNFINISHED STORY

[The reader who is curious to know the rest of Mamillius' story will find a very good guess in *Collected Ghost Stories* by M. R. James. Ellen Terry, when a child, made her first appearance on the stage in the part of Mamillius.]

*Scene—A room in LEONTES' palace*

*Enter HERMIONE, with her little son MAMILLIUS, and LADIES.*

HERMIONE: Come, sir, now I am for you again: pray you, sit by us, And tell's a tale.

MAMILLIUS: Merry or sad shall't be?

HERMIONE: As merry as you will.

MAMILLIUS: A sad tale's best for winter: I have one Of sprites and goblins.

HERMIONE: Let's have that, good sir.  
Come on, sit down:—come on, and do your best  
To fright me with your sprites; you're powerful at it.

MAMILLIUS: There was a man—

HERMIONE:

Nay, come, sit down; then on.

(*He climbs upon her knee.*)

MAMILLIUS: Dwelt by a churchyard:—I will tell it softly;  
Yond crickets<sup>1</sup> shall not hear it.

HERMIONE:

Come on, then,

And give't me in mine ear. (*They whisper together.*)

From *The Winter's Tale*.

## THE SHEEP-SHEARING FEAST

[Leontes, King of Sicily, seized with a kind of madness, fancied his loyal and devoted wife Hermione to be unfaithful, and commanded one of his lords to take their infant daughter (Perdita) to some remote place outside his dominions and leave her there. This having been done, the infant was found by a shepherd and brought up by him as his daughter. The prince Florizel, son of Polixenes king of Bohemia, has fallen in love with Perdita and has abandoned his father's court for the shepherd's cottage, where he is known as "Doricles." Polixenes and the lord Camillo, his friend, have determined to disguise themselves and pay a visit to the shepherd and his daughter "of most rare note." They arrive during the sheep-shearing festivities.]

*Scene—A Lawn before a Shepherd's Cottage*

*Enter FLORIZEL and PERDITA.*

FLORIZEL: These your unusual weeds to each part of you  
Do give a life; no shepherdess, but Flora  
Peering in April's front . . . I bless the time  
When my good falcon made her flight across  
Thy father's ground.

PERDITA: Now, Jove afford you cause! . . .

*Enter Shepherd, with POLIXENES and CAMILLO, disguised; DORCAS,  
a Shepherdess, and others.*

Sir, welcome.

It is my father's will, I should take on me

The hostess-ship o' the day. (*To CAMILLO*) You're welcome, sir.—

<sup>1</sup> "The ladies-in-waiting, with their tittering and chirping laughter" (Furness).





Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and  
The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,  
The flower-de-luce being one. O, these I lack,  
To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,  
To strew him o'er and o'er.

FLORIZEL:                               What, like a corse?

PERDITA: No, like a bank, for love to lie and play on,  
Not like a corse; or if, not to be buried  
But quick, and in mine arms. Come, take your flowers.  
Methinks, I play as I have seen them do  
In Whitsun-pastorals: sure, this robe of mine  
Does change my disposition.

FLORIZEL:                               What you do  
Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,  
I'd have you do it ever: when you sing,  
I'd have you buy and sell so; so give alms;  
Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,  
To sing them too: when you do dance, I wish you  
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do  
Nothing but that; move still, still so,  
And own no other function: each your doing,  
So singular in each particular,  
Crowns what you are doing in the present deed,  
That all your acts are queens.

PERDITA:                               O Doricles,  
Your praises are too large: but that your youth,  
And the true blood which peepeth fairly through't,  
Do plainly give you out an unstained shepherd,  
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,  
You woo'd me the false way.

FLORIZEL:                               I think you have  
As little skill to fear, as I have purpose  
To put you to't.—But, come; our dance, I pray.  
Your hand, my Perdita: so turtles pair,  
That never mean to part.

PERDITA:                               I'll swear for 'em.

*From The Winter's Tale.*

## IMOGEN

[Imogen, daughter of Cymbeline, King of Britain, has married Posthumus without her father's consent, and Posthumus is banished. At Rome, Iachimo has made a wager with Posthumus concerning his wife's honour. Iachimo, having planned to win the wager by trickery, has come to Britain and has persuaded Imogen to keep in her bed-chamber a trunk supposed to contain valuables belonging to her husband.]

*Scene—IMOGEN's Bedchamber; a trunk in one corner of it*

*IMOGEN reading in her bed; a LADY attending.*

IMOGEN: Who's there? my woman Helen?

LADY: Please you, madam.

IMOGEN: What hour is it?

LADY: Almost midnight, madam.

IMOGEN: I have read three hours then: mine eyes are weak;  
Fold down the leaf where I have left: to bed.  
Take not away the taper, leave it burning;  
And if thou canst awake by four o' the clock,  
I pr'ythee, call me. Sleep hath seized me wholly. (*Exit LADY.*)  
To your protection I commend me, gods!  
From fairies and the tempters of the night  
Guard me, beseech ye! (*Sleeps.*)

*IACHIMO comes from the trunk.*

IACHIMO: The crickets sing, and man's o'er-laboured sense  
Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus  
Did softly press the rushes ere he wakened  
The chastity he wounded.—Cytherea,  
How bravely thou becom'st thy bed, fresh lily,  
And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!  
But kiss; one kiss!—Rubies unparagoned,  
How dearly they do't!—'Tis her breathing that  
Perfumes the chamber thus: the flame o' the taper  
Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids,  
To see the enclosed lights, now canopied  
Under these windows<sup>1</sup>, white and azure, laced

<sup>1</sup> Shutters (i.e. her eyelids). See footnote on p. 205.

With blue of heaven's own tinct.—But my design!  
To note the chamber: I will write all down:—  
Such and such pictures;—there the window;—such  
The adornment of her bed;—the arras, figures,  
Why, such, and such;—and the contents o' the story,—  
Ah, but some natural notes about her body,  
Above ten thousand meaner moveables  
Would testify, to enrich mine inventory.  
O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her,  
And be her sense but as a monument  
Thus in a chapel lying!—Come off, come off;—(*Taking off her  
bracelet.*)

As slippery, as the Gordian knot was hard!  
'Tis mine; and this will witness outwardly,  
As strongly as the conscience<sup>1</sup> does within,  
To the madding of her lord.—On her left breast  
A mole cinque spotted, like the crimson drops  
I' the bottom of a cowslip. Here's a voucher,  
Stronger than ever law could make: this secret  
Will force him think I have picked the lock, and ta'en  
The treasure of her honour. No more.—To what end?  
Why should I write this down, that's riveted,  
Screwed to my memory? She hath been reading late  
The tale of Tereus; here the leaf's turn'd down,  
Where Philomel gave up.—I have enough:  
To the trunk again, and shut the spring of it.  
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning  
May bare the raven's eye! I lodge in fear;  
Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here.

*Clock strikes. He goes into the trunk.*

<sup>1</sup> Consciousness.

[Iachimo has returned to Rome with his alleged proofs against Imogen, and Posthumus has fallen into the trap. He has written to his wife telling her he is now at Milford-Haven. He has given his faithful servant Pisanio secret instructions to kill her there. Pisanio is faithful to Imogen also. Later he will disclose Posthumus' instructions and will tell her he will not obey them.]

*Scene—A room in CYMBELINE's palace*

*Present: IMOGEN and PISANIO, servant to POSTHUMUS.*

IMOGEN: O, for a horse with wings!—Hear'st thou, Pisanio? He is at Milford-Haven: read, and tell me How far 't is thither. If one of mean affairs May plod it in a week, why may not I Glide thither in a day?—Then, true Pisanio, Who long'st, like me, to see thy lord; who long'st,— O, let me bate!—but not like me;—yet long'st,— But in a fainter kind:—O! not like me, For mine's beyond beyond—say, and speak thick<sup>1</sup>— Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing To the smothering of the sense—how far it is To this same blessed Milford: and, by the way, Tell me how Wales was made so happy as To inherit such a haven: but, first of all, How we may steal from hence; and, for the gap That we shall make in time, from our hence-going And our return, to excuse:—but first, how get hence. Why should excuse be born or e'er begot? We'll talk of that hereafter. Pr'ythee, speak How many score of miles may we well ride 'Twixt hour and hour?

PISANIO: One score 'twixt sun and sun, Madam, 's enough for you, (*aside*) and too much too.

IMOGEN: Why, one that rode to's execution, man, Could never go so slow: I have heard of riding wagers, Where horses have been nimbler than the sands That run i' the clock's behalf.—But this is foolery.— Go, bid my woman feign a sickness; say, She'll home to her father; and provide me, presently,

<sup>1</sup> Rapidly.

A riding suit no costlier than would fit  
A franklin's housewife.

PISANIO: Madam, you're best consider.

IMOGEN: I see before me, man, nor here, nor here,  
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them  
That I cannot look through. Away, I pr'ythee:  
Do as I bid thee. There's no more to say;  
Accessible is none but Milford way.

[Belarius, a British lord, falsely accused of being confederate with the Romans, and banished from Cymbeline's court, is living in a cave in Wales. He has with him the King's two sons, Guiderius and Arviragus, whom he stole in their childhood. They regard Belarius as their father.]

*Scene—Wales: a mountainous country, with a cave*

*Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS and ARVIRAGUS.*

BELARIUS: Now for our mountain sport; up to yond hill,  
Your legs are young; I'll tread these flats. Consider,  
When you above perceive me like a crow,  
That it is place which lessens and sets off;  
And you may then revolve what tales I have told you  
Of courts, of princes, of the tricks in war:  
This service is not service, so being done,  
But being so allowed: to apprehend thus,  
Draws us a profit from all things we see;  
And often, to our comfort, shall we find  
The sharded beetle in a safer hold  
Than is the full-winged eagle. O, this life  
Is nobler than attending for a check,  
Richer than doing nothing for a bauble,  
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk:  
Such gain the cap of him that makes 'em fine,  
Yet keeps his book uncrossed: no life to ours.

GUIDERIUS: Out of your proof you speak: we, poor unfledged,  
Have never winged from view o' the nest, nor know not  
What air's from home. Haply this life is best,  
If quiet life be best; sweeter to you

That have a sharper known; well corresponding  
With your stiff age: but unto us it is  
A cell of ignorance; travelling a-bed;  
A prison for a debtor, that not dares  
To stride a limit.

ARVIRAGUS:           What should we speak of  
When we are old as you? when we shall hear  
The rain and wind beat dark December, how  
In this our pinching cave shall we discourse  
The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing:  
We are beastly; subtle as the fox for prey;  
Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat:  
Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage  
We make a quire, as doth the prisoned bird,  
And sing our bondage freely.

• BELARIUS:                       How you speak!  
Did you but know the city's usuries,  
And felt them knowingly: the art o' the court,  
As hard to leave as keep; whose top to climb  
Is certain falling, or so slippery that  
The fear's as bad as falling: the toil o' the war,  
A pain that only seems to seek out danger  
I' the name of fame and honour, which dies i' the search  
And hath as oft a slanderous epitaph  
As record of fair act, nay, many times,  
Doth ill deserve by doing well, what's worse,  
Must court'sy at the censure.—O boys, this story  
The world may read in me.

*Scene—Before the cave of BELARIUS*

*Enter IMOGEN, in boy's clothes.*

IMOGEN: I see a man's life is a tedious one:  
I have tired myself; and for two nights together  
Have made the ground my bed. I should be sick,  
But that my resolution helps me.—Milford,  
When from the mountain-top Pisanio showed thee,  
Thou wast within a ken: O Jove! I think

Foundations fly the wretched; such, I mean,  
Where they should be relieved. Two beggars told me  
I could not miss my way: will poor folks lie,  
That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis  
A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder,  
When rich ones scarce tell true: to lapse in fullness  
Is sorer than to lie for need; and falsehood  
Is worse in kings than beggars.—My dear lord!  
Thou art one o' the false ones: now I think on thee  
My hunger's gone; but even before, I was  
At point to sink for food.—But what is this?  
Here is a path to't: 'tis some savage hold:  
I were best not call; I dare not call: yet famine,  
Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant.  
Plenty and peace breeds cowards; hardness ever  
Of hardiness is mother. Ho! who's here?  
If any thing that's civil, speak; if savage,  
Take or lend. Ho!—No answer? then I'll enter.  
Best draw my sword; and if mine enemy  
But fear the sword like me, he'll scarcely look on't.  
Such a foe, good heavens! (*Exit into the cave.*)

*Enter* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.

GUIDERIUS: There is cold meat i' the cave; we'll browse on that,  
Whilst what we have killed be cooked.

BELARIUS (*looking into the cave*): Stay; come not in.  
But that it eats our victuals, I should think  
Here were a fairy.

GUIDERIUS:           What's the matter, sir?

BELARIUS: By Jupiter, an angel! or, if not,  
An earthly paragon! Behold divineness  
No elder than a boy!

*Re-enter* IMOGEN.

IMOGEN:           Good masters, harm me not:  
Before I entered here, I called; and thought  
To have begged or bought what I have took: good troth,  
I have stol'n naught, nor would not, though I had found  
Gold strew'd i' the floor. Here's money for my meat;



I would have left it on the board so soon  
As I had made my meal, and parted  
With prayers for the provider.

GUIDERIUS: Money, youth?

ARVIRAGUS: All gold and silver rather turn to dirt!  
As 'tis no better reckoned, but of those  
Who worship dirty gods.

IMOGEN: I see you're angry:  
Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should  
Have died had I not made it.

BELARIUS: Whither bound?

IMOGEN: To Milford-Haven.

BELARIUS: What's your name?

IMOGEN: Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who  
Is bound for Italy; he embarked at Milford;  
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,  
I am fall'n in this offence.

BELARIUS: Prithee, fair youth,  
Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds  
By this rude place we live in. Well encountered!  
'Tis almost night: you shall have better cheer  
Ere you depart; and thanks to stay and eat it.  
Boys, bid him welcome.

GUIDERIUS: Were you a woman, youth,  
I should woo hard but be your groom. In honesty,  
I bid for you as I'd buy.

ARVIRAGUS: I'll make 't my comfort  
He is man; I'll love him as my brother:  
And such a welcome as I'd give to him  
After long absence, such is yours: most welcome!  
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

[The wicked Queen, stepmother of Imogen, is anxious to get rid of Pisanio, because he is a faithful follower of Posthumus; and for this purpose has given him a box supposed to contain poison. Actually, this box contains nothing more than a drug inducing sleep. Pisanio before parting from Imogen, to return to court, has handed the box to her, having accepted in good faith the Queen's statement that its contents were a cure for all illness. Imogen, feeling ill, has taken some of the drug.]

*Scene—The same*

*Enter ARVIRAGUS, bearing IMOGEN as dead in his arms.*

BELARIUS:                                Look, here he comes,  
And bears the dire occasion in his arms,  
Of what we blame him for.

ARVIRAGUS:                              The bird is dead,  
That we have made so much on. I had rather  
Have skipped from sixteen years of age to sixty,  
To have turned my leaping-time into a crutch,  
Than have seen this.

GUIDERIUS:                              O sweetest, fairest lily!  
My brother wears thee not th' one half so well,  
As when thou grew'st thyself . . .

ARVIRAGUS:                              With fairest flowers,  
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,  
I'll sweeten thy sad grave: thou shalt not lack  
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor  
The azured harebell, like thy veins, no, nor  
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,  
Out-sweetened not thy breath: the ruddock<sup>1</sup> would,  
With charitable bill,—O bill, sore-shaming  
Those rich-left heirs, that let their fathers lie  
Without a monument!—bring thee all this;  
Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none,  
To winter-ground thy corse.

GUIDERIUS:                              Pr'ythee, have done;  
And do not play in wench-like words with that  
Which is so serious. Let us bury him,

<sup>1</sup> Robin redbreast.

And not protract with admiration what  
Is now due debt.—To the grave.

ARVIRAGUS: Say, where shall's lay him?

GUIDERIUS: By good Euriphile, our mother

ARVIRAGUS: Be 't so . . .

GUIDERIUS: Come on then, and remove him.

ARVIRAGUS: So.—Begin.

### SONG

GUIDERIUS: *† Fear no more the heat o' the sun.  
Nor the furious winter's rages;  
Thou thy worldly task hast done,  
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:  
Golden lads and girls all must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.*

ARVIRAGUS: *Fear no more the frown o' the great,  
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;  
Care no more to clothe and eat;  
To thee the reed is as the oak:  
The sceptre, learning, physic, must  
All follow this, and come to dust.*

GUIDERIUS: *Fear no more the lightning-flash,*

ARVIRAGUS: *Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;*

GUIDERIUS: *Fear not slander, censure rash;*

ARVIRAGUS: *Thou hast finished joy and moan:*

BOTH: *All lovers young, all lovers must  
Consign to<sup>1</sup> thee, and come to dust.*

GUIDERIUS: *No exorciser harm thee!*

ARVIRAGUS: *Nor no witchcraft charm thee!*

GUIDERIUS: *Ghost unlaid forbear thee!*

ARVIRAGUS: *Nothing ill come near thee!*

BOTH: *Quiet consummation have;  
And renown'd be thy grave!*

<sup>1</sup> *Consign to* ("seal the same, contract with"—Steevens).

[Posthumus has joined with Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus in rescuing Cymbeline during a battle with the Romans; but afterwards, being taken for a Roman, has been handed over to a gaoler. His identity is discovered later.]

*Scene—A prison*

*Enter GAOLER with POSTHUMUS.*

GAOLER: Come, sir, are you ready for death?

POSTHUMUS: Over-roasted rather; ready long ago.

GAOLER: Hanging is the word, sir: if you be ready for that, you are well cooked.

POSTHUMUS: So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators, the dish pays the shot.

•GAOLER: A heavy reckoning for you, sir; but the comfort is, you shall be called to no more payments, fear no more tavern-bills, which are often the sadness of parting, as the procuring of mirth. You come in faint for want of meat, depart reeling with too much drink, sorry that you have paid too much, and sorry that you are paid too much; purse and brain both empty: the brain the heavier for being too light, the purse too light, being drawn of heaviness. Of this contradiction you shall now be quit.—O, the charity of a penny cord! it sums up thousands in a trice: you have no true debtor-and-creditor but it: of what's past, is, and to come, the discharge.—Your neck, sir, is pen, book, and counters; so the acquittance follows.

POSTHUMUS: I am merrier to die, than thou art to live.

GAOLER: Indeed, sir, he that sleeps feels not the toothache; but a man that were to sleep your sleep, and a hangman to help him to bed, I think he would change places with his officer; for, look you, sir, you know not which way you shall go.

POSTHUMUS: Yes, indeed do I, fellow.

GAOLER: Your death has eyes in's head, then; I have not seen him so pictured: you must either be directed by some that take upon them to know, or to take upon yourself that which I am sure you do not know, or jump<sup>1</sup> the after-enquiry on your own peril: and

<sup>1</sup> Hazard.

how you shall speed in your journey's end, I think you'll never return to tell one.

POSTHUMUS: I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going, but such as wink, and will not use them.

GAOLER: What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness! I am sure, hanging's the way of winking.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

MESSENGER: Knock off his manacles: bring your prisoner to the king.

POSTHUMUS: Thou bring'st good news. I am called to be made free.

GAOLER: I'll be hanged then.

POSTHUMUS: Thou shalt be then freer than a gaoler; no bolts for the dead.

*Exeunt POSTHUMUS and MESSENGER.*

[Iachimo has confessed his villany; but Imogen, still disguised as a youth, has not yet been recognised by her husband.]

*Scene—CYMBELINE's tent*

*Present: CYMBELINE, POSTHUMUS, PISANIO, IMOGEN and others.*

POSTHUMUS: O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,  
Some upright justicer! Thou, king, send out  
For torturers ingenious: it is I  
That all the abhorred things o' the earth amend  
By being worse than they. I am Posthumus,  
That killed thy daughter . . . my life, my wife? O Imogen,  
Imogen, Imogen!

IMOGEN: Peace, my lord! hear, hear!

POSTHUMUS: Shall 's have a play of this! Thou scornful page,  
There lie thy part. (*Striking her; she falls.*)

PISANIO: O gentlemen, help  
Mine and your mistress.—O, my Lord Posthumus!  
You ne'er killed Imogen till now.—Help, help!—  
Mine honoured lady!

CYMBELINE: Does the world go round?

POSTHUMUS: How come these staggers<sup>1</sup> on me?

PISANIO: Wake, my mistress!

CYMBELINE: If this be so, the gods do mean to strike me  
To death with mortal joy . . .

GUIDERIUS: This is, sure, Fidele.

IMOGEN: Why did you throw your wedded lady from you?  
Think that you are upon a rock; and now  
Throw me again. (*Embracing him.*)

POSTHUMUS: Hang there like fruit, my soul,  
Till the tree die.

From *Cymbeline*.

<sup>1</sup> Giddiness, bewilderment.



### III

## THE TRAGIC MUSE

1. The Star-crossed Lovers	<i>p.</i> 115
2. The Prince of Denmark	123
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5. The Old King	168



[Among the five tragedies dealt with in this section, *Romeo and Juliet*, the earliest in date, stands by itself. In form it is the most lyrical, and in subject-matter we have the theme of love and death turning discord into harmony. To this idea of reconciliation Shakespeare was to return in his latest plays, notably *The Tempest*. In *Romeo and Juliet* the emphasis seems to be more on circumstance than on character. It is true that, when Romeo reaches the point marked by his words "then I defy you, stars" (p. 120), he becomes a new man and a greater one, but in this "tragedy of mischance" it is the miscarriage of the Friar's message which causes the hero to take his fatal step.

*Hamlet*—the most popular of all these plays—might be called the autobiography of a soul. The hero tells us his inmost thoughts. He is involved in a Promethean struggle; but its significance is only partly known to us. "The rest is silence," and there are heights and depths in human nature that only Shakespeare knows.

*Othello*, the domestic tragedy, is perhaps the most heart-rending of all, being nearer than *Lear* to our everyday life. We feel how happy Othello and Desdemona would have been, had Iago left them alone. But in this play Shakespeare has placed his greatest villain. Othello, a man of noble character, but one who could be passionate when roused, is no match for this demon of Italy, "more fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea." Nor is the childlike and gentle Desdemona. Once Iago has inoculated the Moor with the fatal virus, both he and Desdemona move onwards to their doom.

Once and once only, the Tragic Muse leads Shakespeare to the north of Britain, to find in the grey moors and misty hills of Scotland a fitting background for *Macbeth*, a play of darkness and blood. This is a dramatic duet, for Macbeth and his wife are equally protagonists; and Lady Macbeth is certainly the "leading lady" among Shakespeare's tragic *dramatis personæ*. Man and wife, they support each other, and they suffer together. When at the end Macbeth finds himself alone, he has nothing left but his indomitable courage with which to fight as a forlorn hope. He has Hamlet's meditative quality, but nothing of his nobility. Macbeth is like Hamlet when he lets "I dare not" wait upon "I would"; but his only fear is of the supernatural, and this the reader will observe, though it has not been found possible to find room for the witches in this book.

*Lear* is described as "King of Britain"; but Shakespeare's theme is timeless and universal, and the field of the hero's sufferings is bounded not by the cliffs of Dover but by "the last peaks of the world beyond all seas." Lear is Job without Job's opportunity for repentance, for his mind is gone. Here is a beggar king, foolish and old and pitiful. But there is a grandeur about him which keeps him still a king. And his

last words sound almost a triumphant note, when some glimmer of the truth seems to light up the darkness of his mind; for, holding Cordelia's dead body in his arms, he cries:

Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips,  
Look there, look there!

When Lear goes out into the storm he is following the path he has himself chosen long ago. In all these tragedies it is some flaw in the hero's character that is the root or final cause of the catastrophe. We are all imperfect creatures, and every man may see something of himself in Romeo, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth or Lear. There is nothing in Shakespeare which is not in man.]

## I. THE STAR-CROSSED LOVERS

[There is a feud between Montagues and Capulets, two great families of Verona. The lovers are Romeo, a Montague, and Juliet, a Capulet.]

*Scene—CAPULET'S orchard*

*Present: ROMEO and JULIET.*

JULIET: I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO: I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;

And but thou love me, let them find me here:

My life were better ended by their hate

Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love . . .

JULIET: Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,

Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek

For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.

Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny

What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!

Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay";

And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swearest,

Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries,

They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:

Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,

I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,

So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.

In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;

And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:  
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,  
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me;  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

ROMEO: Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,—

JULIET: O, swear not by the moon, th'inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO: What shall I swear by?

JULIET: Do not swear at all,  
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO: If my heart's dear love—

- JULIET: Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,  
I have no joy of this contráct to-night:  
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be  
Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night!  
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.  
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

[Juliet has sent a message to Romeo by her old Nurse, who promised to bring back the answer in half an hour. Three hours have passed, and Juliet has become anxious for her return.]

*Scene—The same*

JULIET: O God, she comes!

*Enter NURSE and her man PETER.*

O honey nurse, what news?  
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

NURSE: Peter, stay at the gate.

*Exit PETER.*

JULIET: Now, good sweet nurse,—O Lord, why look'st thou sad?  
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;  
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news  
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

NURSE: I am a-weary, give me leave awhile:—  
Fie, how my bones ache! what a jaunt have I had!

JULIET: I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:  
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak;—good, good nurse, speak.

NURSE: Jesu, what haste! can you not stay awhile?  
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET: How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath  
To say to me that thou art out of breath?  
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay  
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.  
Is thy news good or bad? answer to that;  
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:  
Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

NURSE: Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to  
choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his face be better than  
any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot,  
and a body,—though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past  
compare: He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him, as  
gentle as a lamb.—Go thy ways, wench; serve God.—What, have  
you dined at home?

JULIET: No, no: but all this did I know before.  
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

NURSE: Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I?  
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.  
My back o' t'other side,—O, my back, my back!  
Beshrew your heart for sending me about,  
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

JULIET: I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.  
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

•NURSE: Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant, a virtuous,—Where is your mother?

JULIET: Where is my mother!—why, she is within;  
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!  
“Your love says, like an honest gentleman,—  
Where is your mother?”

NURSE: O God’s lady dear!  
Are you so hot? marry, come up, I trow;  
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?  
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET: Here’s such a coil!—come, what says Romeo?

NURSE: Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

JULIET: I have.

NURSE: Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence’ cell;  
There stays a husband to make you a wife.

[The lovers have now been married secretly by Friar Laurence.]

*Scene—CAPULET’S Orchard*

*Enter ROMEO and JULIET above, at the window.*

JULIET: Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:  
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,  
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;  
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:  
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

•ROMEO: It was the lark, the herald of the morn,  
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks  
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:  
Night’s candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.  
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET: Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I:  
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,  
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,

And light thee on thy way to Mantua:  
Therefore stay yet,—thou need'st not to be gone.

ROMEO: Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.  
I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,  
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;  
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat  
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:  
I have more care to stay than will to go:—  
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.—  
How is't, my soul? let's talk,—it is not day.

JULIET: It is, it is,—hie hence, be gone, away!  
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,  
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.  
Some say the lark makes sweet division;  
This doth not so, for she divideth us:  
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes;  
O, now I would they had changed voices too!  
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,  
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day.  
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

ROMEO: Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend . . . (*Descends.*)

JULIET: O, think'st thou, we shall ever meet again?

ROMEO: I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve  
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

JULIET: O God! I have an ill-divining soul:  
Methinks, I see thee, now thou art below,  
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:  
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

ROMEO: And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:  
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu! Adieu!

[Juliet has drunk a "distilled liquor" given her by Friar Laurence which has put her into a deep sleep having the appearance of death. Romeo (now banished to Mantua) is to be present at the moment of Juliet's waking and carry her away. This plan is explained to Romeo in a letter from the friar; but his messenger has not arrived, and Romeo's servant has hastened to Mantua to tell him (as everyone believes) that Juliet is dead.]

*Scene—Mantua, A street*

ROMEO meets BALTHASAR, his servant.

ROMEO: News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?  
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?  
How doth my lady? Is my father well?  
How fares my Juliet? that I ask again;  
For nothing can be ill if she be well.

BALTHASAR: Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.  
Her body sleeps in Capel's monument,  
And her immortal part with angels lives.  
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,  
And presently took post to tell it you.  
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,  
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

ROMEO: Is it even so? then, I defy you, stars!  
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,  
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

BALTHASAR: I do beseech you, sir, have patience:  
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import  
Some misadventure.

ROMEO: Tush, thou art deceived:  
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.  
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BALTHASAR: No, my good lord.

ROMEO: No matter: get thee gone,  
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight. (*Exit BALTHASAR.*)  
Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.  
Let's see for means:—O mischief, thou art swift  
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!  
I do remember an apothecary,

And hereabouts he dwells, which late I noted  
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,  
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,  
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:  
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,  
An alligator stuffed, and other skins  
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves  
A beggarly account of empty boxes,  
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,  
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,  
Were thinly scattered to make up a show.  
Noting this penury, to myself I said—  
An if a man did need a poison now,  
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,  
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.  
O, this same thought did but forerun my need,  
And this same needy man must sell it me.

[Romeo has obtained from the apothecary a poison which he intends to drink at Juliet's grave.]

*Scene—A churchyard; in it a monument belonging to the Capulets*

- ROMEO: How oft, when men are at the point of death,  
Have they been merry! which their keepers call  
A lightning before death: O, how may I  
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!  
Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,  
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:  
Thou art not conquered; beauty's ensign yet  
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—  
Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe  
That unsubstantial death is amorous,  
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps  
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?  
For fear of that I still will stay with thee,  
And never from this palace of dim night  
Depart again: here, here will I remain



With worms that are thy chambermaids; O, here  
Will I set up my everlasting rest,  
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars  
From this world-wearied flesh.—Eyes, look your last!  
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you,  
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss  
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!  
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!  
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on  
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!  
Here's to my love! (*Drinks.*)—O true apothecary,  
Thy drugs are quick!—Thus with a kiss I die. (*Dies.*)

*Scene—The same*

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE. JULIET wakes.*

JULIET: O comfortable friar! where is my lord?  
I do remember well where I should be,  
And there I am.—Where is my Romeo? (*Noise within.*)

FRIAR: I hear some noise.—Lady, come from that nest  
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:

A greater power than we can contradict  
Hath thwarted our intents: come, come away.

Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead . . .

Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;

Come, go, good Juliet.—(*Noise again.*) I dare no longer stay.

JULIET: Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—(*Exit FRIAR.*)

What's here? a cup closed in my true love's hand?

Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.

O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop,

To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;

Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,

To make me die with a restorative. (*Kisses him.*)

Thy lips are warm.

WATCHMAN (*within*): Lead, boy:—which way?

JULIET: Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief.—O happy dagger! (*snatching ROMEO's dagger*).

This is thy sheath; (*stabs herself*) there rust, and let me die. (*Dies.*)

## EPILOGUE

(PRINCE of Verona, MONTAGUE and CAPULET.)

PRINCE: Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!  
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,  
That Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love;  
And I, for winking at your discords too,  
Have lost a brace of kinsmen:—all are punished.

CAPULET: O brother Montague! give me thy hand:  
This is my daughter's jointure; for no more  
Can I demand.

MONTAGUE: But I can give thee more:  
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;  
That while Verona by that name is known  
There shall no figure at such rate be set  
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET: As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie;  
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

PRINCE: A glooming peace this morning with it brings;  
The sun for sorrow will not show his head.

*From Romeo and Juliet.*

## 2. THE PRINCE OF DENMARK

*Scene—Elsinore. The Council Chamber in the castle*

*The KING and QUEEN, with the COUNSELLORS, all clad in gay apparel, have just withdrawn, leaving Prince HAMLET, in black, alone. His father, the late king, has recently died, and his mother has made a most speedy marriage with his uncle, now KING. HAMLET meditates on this cruel affront to his father's memory.*

•HAMLET: O, that this too too sullied<sup>1</sup> flesh would melt,  
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew,  
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God, God,

<sup>1</sup> Following N.S. (Globe and First Folio = *solid*.)

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't, ah fie, 'tis an unweeded garden  
That grows to seed, things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this,  
But two months dead, nay not so much, not two,  
So excellent a king, that was to this  
Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to my mother,  
That he might not beteem<sup>1</sup> the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly—heaven and earth!  
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on, and yet within a month—  
Let me not think on't—Frailty thy name is woman!  
A little month or ere those shoes were old  
With which she followed my poor father's body,  
Like Niobe all tears; why she, even she—  
O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason  
Would have mourned longer—married with my uncle,  
My father's brother, but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules: within a month,  
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
Had left the flushing in her galléd eyes  
She married. O most wicked speed, to post  
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
It is not, nor it cannot come to good.

*Scene—Elsinore. A platform before the Castle*

*Enter HAMLET, with his friend HORATIO and MARCELLUS an officer.*

HAMLET: The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

HORATIO: It is a nipping and an eager air.

HAMLET: What hour now?

HORATIO: I think it lacks of twelve.

MARCELLUS: No, it is struck.

<sup>1</sup> Allow.

HORATIO: Indeed! I heard it not: then it draws near the season  
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*

What does this mean, my lord?

HAMLET: The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;  
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

HORATIO: Is it a custom?

HAMLET: Ay, marry, is't . . .

*Enter GHOST.*

HORATIO: Look, my lord! it comes.

HAMLET: Angels and ministers of grace defend us!  
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,  
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,  
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,  
Thou comest in such a questionable shape  
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, father, royal Dane: O answer me,  
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell  
Why thy canonised bones, hearséd in death,  
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,  
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urned,  
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws  
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,  
That thou, dead corse, again, in complète steel,  
Revisit'st thus the glimpse of the moon,  
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature  
So horridly to shake our disposition,  
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

*GHOST beckons.*

HORATIO: It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some impartment did desire  
To you alone.

MARCELLUS: Look, with what courteous action  
It waves you to a more removed ground:  
But do not go with it.

HORATIO:                   No, by no means.

HAMLET: It will not speak: then I will follow it.

HORATIO: Do not, my lord.

HAMLET:                   Why, what should be the fear?  
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;  
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself?  
It waves me forth again:—I'll follow it.

HORATIO: What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,  
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
And there assume some other horrible form,  
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
And draw you into madness? think of it:  
The very place puts toys of desperation,  
Without more motive, into every brain  
That looks so many fathoms to the sea  
And hears it roar beneath.

HAMLET: It waves me still:—go on, I'll follow thee.

MARCELLUS: You shall not go, my lord.

HAMLET:   Hold off your hands.

HORATIO: Be ruled; you shall not go.

HAMLET:                   My fate cries out,  
And makes each petty artery in this body  
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.—(GHOST *beckons*.)  
Still am I called.—Unhand me, gentlemen,—  
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets<sup>1</sup> me:—  
I say, away!—Go on, I'll follow thee.

*Exeunt GHOST and HAMLET.*

<sup>1</sup> Hinders.

[Hamlet has learned from the ghost of his father that he was murdered by the present King, and that his mother was unfaithful to her marriage vow. Hamlet, deeply moved, decides to feign madness to hide his investigation of the story told by the ghost. He had fallen in love with Ophelia, daughter of Polonius (the King's Chamberlain), who has suggested to the King that this love affair has upset the Prince's mind.]

*Scene—A room in the Castle*

*Present: POLONIUS. Enter HAMLET reading.*

POLONIUS: How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET: Well, God-a-mercy.

POLONIUS: Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET: Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.<sup>1</sup>

POLONIUS: Not I, my lord.

HAMLET: Then I would you were so honest a man.

POLONIUS: Honest, my lord?

HAMLET: Ay, sir: to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

POLONIUS: That's very true, my lord.

HAMLET: For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good<sup>2</sup> kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?

POLONIUS: I have, my lord.

HAMLET: Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but<sup>3</sup> as your daughter may conceive, friend, look to't. (*He reads again.*)

POLONIUS: How say you by that?—(*Aside*) Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much

<sup>1</sup> Procurer.

<sup>2</sup> Following N.S. (Globe has *God*).

<sup>3</sup> Following Quarto edition. (Globe, following First Folio, has *not* after this word.)

extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET: Words, words, words . . .

POLONIUS (*Aside*): How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. (*Exit.*)

*Scene—The same*

*Present: HAMLET and ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, courtiers.*

HAMLET: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

GUILDENSTERN: Prison, my lord?

HAMLET: Denmark's a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ: Then is the world one.

HAMLET: A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst.

ROSENCRANTZ: We think not so, my lord.

•HAMLET: Why then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ: Why, then your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind.

•HAMLET: O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams. . . . I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel!

in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me;—no, nor woman neither.

[The players have come to court. Hamlet has welcomed them, and has heard them rehearse the tale of Troy.]

*Scene—The same*

HAMLET: O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous, that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,  
That, from her working, all his visage wanned;  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function<sup>1</sup> suiting  
With forms<sup>2</sup> to his conceit? and all for nothing!  
For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her? What would he do  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;  
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,  
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,  
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,  
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,  
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,  
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damned defeat was made . . . I'll have these players  
Play something like the murder of my father  
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;  
I'll rent him to the quick: if he but blench,  
I know my course.

<sup>1</sup> Bearing.

<sup>2</sup> Gestures.



[Hamlet, oppressed by his heavy burden, has thought of taking his own life. The king has arranged with Polonius to place Ophelia where the Prince is expected to walk, that they may spy upon him and judge whether his love for her is the cause of his unbalanced mind. The attitude of Hamlet towards Ophelia in the following scene will be less perplexing if we understand that he has overheard the hatching of this plot and is regarding her as a party to it.<sup>1</sup>]

*Scene—The same*

*Enter HAMLET. OPHELIA, at first unseen by him, is reading a book.*

✓HAMLET: To be, or not to be, that is the question:—  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings<sup>2</sup> and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep—  
No more, and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wished, to die, to sleep!  
To sleep, perchance to dream, ay, there's the rub;  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause. There's the respect,  
That makes calamity of so long life:  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have

<sup>1</sup> This point is fully discussed in Professor Dover Wilson's Introduction to the play (*N.S.*)

<sup>2</sup> Missiles from field-gun.



translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

OPHELIA: Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so . . .

HAMLET: Get thee to a nunnery.<sup>1</sup> Go, farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell. (*Exit.*) . . .

•OPHELIA: O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That sucked the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;  
That unmatched form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

*Scene—A hall in the Castle*

*Present: HAMLET. Enter HORATIO.*

HAMLET: What, ho, Horatio!

HORATIO: Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET: Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man  
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

HORATIO: O, my dear lord,—

HAMLET:                               Nay, do not think I flatter;  
For what advancement may I hope from thee,  
That no revénue hast but thy good spirits  
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flattered?  
No; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,

<sup>1</sup> This was a cant word for a house of ill fame, and Professor Dover Wilson suggests (*N.S.*) that Hamlet has this meaning in mind.



[The play is performed before the Court. When the murder scene is reached the King rises and calls for lights, and the Court withdraws. Later Hamlet discovers the King, but forbears to strike, as he is kneeling in prayer. The Queen, in "great affliction of spirit," sends for Hamlet. Polonius, having hidden behind the arras to overhear their conversation, is slain by the Prince. The ghost again appears to Hamlet to "whet his blunted purpose." The King now thinks Hamlet dangerous, and arranges to send him to England with sealed letters requesting that he be beheaded. Still Hamlet delays his revenge.]

*Scene—A plain in Denmark*

*Present: HAMLET, who has just seen FORTINBRAS, with his Norwegian forces, march off on their way to fight the Poles.*

HAMLET: How all occasions do inform against me  
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,  
If his chief good, and market of his time,  
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.  
Sure, He, that made us with such large discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and godlike reason  
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be  
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple  
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—  
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,  
And ever three parts coward,—I do not know  
Why yet I live to say "This thing's to do";  
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,  
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me;  
Witness this army, of such mass and charge,  
Led by a delicate and tender prince,  
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,  
Makes mouths at the invisible event;  
Exposing what is mortal and unsure  
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,  
Even for an egg-shell. 'Rightly to be great  
Is not to stir without great argument,  
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,  
That have a father killed, a mother stained,

Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see  
The imminent death of twenty thousand men  
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,  
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot  
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,  
Which is not tomb enough and continent  
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,  
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[Ophelia, deeply affected by Hamlet's strange behaviour towards her and his killing of her father, has lost her reason.]

*Scene—A room in the Castle*

*Present: the QUEEN, with her ladies.*

QUEEN: Let her come in . . .

OPHELIA *is ushered in, distracted, a lute in her hands and her hair about her shoulders.*

OPHELIA: Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

QUEEN: How now, Ophelia?

OPHELIA (*sings*):

*How should I your true love know  
From another one?  
By his cockle hat and staff,  
And his sandal shoon.*

QUEEN: Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

OPHELIA: Say you? nay, pray you, mark. (*Sings*)

*He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone;  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone.*

QUEEN: Nay, but, Ophelia,—

OPHELIA: Pray you, mark. (*Sings*)

*White his shroud as the mountain snow,—*

*Enter the KING.*

QUEEN: Alas! look here, my lord.

OPHELIA (*sings*):

*Larded with sweet flowers;  
Which bewept to the grave did not go,<sup>1</sup>  
With true-love showers.*

KING: How do you, pretty lady?

OPHELIA: Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

KING: Conceit upon her father . . . How long hath she been thus?

OPHELIA: I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. (*Exit.*)

KING: Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you.

*Scene—The same*

*Present: the KING and LAERTES (son of POLONIUS). Enter the QUEEN.*

KING: How now, sweet queen?

QUEEN: One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
So fast they follow.—Your sister's drowned, Laertes.

LAERTES: Drowned!—O, where?

- QUEEN: There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;  
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make<sup>2</sup>  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:  
There, on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,  
When down her weedy trophies and herself

<sup>1</sup> Following N.S. (Globe omits this word).

<sup>2</sup> This line follows text of Second Quarto not adopted by Globe.

Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,  
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;  
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,  
As one incapable of her own distress,  
Or like a creature native and indued  
Unto that element: but long it could not be,  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death.

LAERTES: Alas, then, is she drowned?

QUEEN: Drowned, drowned.

[Hamlet has opened the sealed letters, has escaped from the voyage to England by boarding a pirate ship, and has returned to Denmark.]

*Scene—A churchyard*

*Two CLOWNS are digging a grave. One of them is singing. Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.*

HAMLET: Hath this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

HORATIO: Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

HAMLET: 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense . . . I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave's this, sirrah?

CLOWN: Mine, sir.

HAMLET: I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

CLOWN: You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

HAMLET: Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore, thou liest.

CLOWN: 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 't will away again from me to you.

HAMLET: What man dost thou dig it for?

CLOWN: For no man, sir.

HAMLET: What woman, then?



CLOWN: For none, neither.

HAMLET: Who is to be buried in't?

CLOWN: One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

HAMLET: How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card,<sup>1</sup> or equivocation will undo us . . .

CLOWN: Here's a skull now; this skull has lain you in the earth three and-twenty years.

HAMLET: Whose was it?

CLOWN: A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

HAMLET: Nay, I know not.

CLOWN: A pestilence on him for a mad rogue, 'a poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

HAMLET: This?

CLOWN: E'en that.

HAMLET: Let me see. (*Takes the skull.*) Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: He hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that . . .

*A procession enters the churchyard: the corpse of OPHELIA is borne in an open coffin, followed by LAERTES, the KING, the QUEEN, etc.*

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king,  
The queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?  
And with such maiméd rites? This doth betoken,  
The corse they follow did with desperate hand  
Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate.

Couch we awhile, and mark. (*Retiring with HORATIO.*)

<sup>1</sup> *By the card* = exactly (an allusion to the mariner's compass).

[The King, having persuaded Laertes to avenge his father by killing Hamlet, lays a wager to be decided by a fencing match between Laertes and Hamlet. The King will provide Laertes with a poisoned weapon.]

*Scene—A hall in the Castle*

*Present: HAMLET and HORATIO.*

HORATIO: You will lose this wager, my lord.

HAMLET: I do not think so; since he went into France I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

HORATIO: Nay, good my lord,—

HAMLET: It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

HORATIO: If your mind dislike anything, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

HAMLET: Not a whit, we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

*Enter the KING, the QUEEN, LAERTES, OSRIC (a courtier), lords, and attendants with foils, etc.*

KING: Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

*The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*

HAMLET: Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong; But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punished

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.

Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;  
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.  
Sir, in this audience,  
Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil  
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,  
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,  
And hurt my brother.

LAERTES: I am satisfied in nature,  
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most  
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour  
I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation  
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,  
I have a voice and precedent of peace,  
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,  
I do receive your offered love like love,  
And will not wrong it.

HAMLET: I embrace it freely;  
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—  
Give us the foils.—Come on! . . .

[To make certain of Hamlet's death, the King (unknown to the Queen) has provided a poisoned cup. The Queen drinks from this, and dies. Laertes wounds Hamlet. In scuffling they change weapons, and Hamlet wounds Laertes. Thus both are mortally wounded. With the poisoned weapon Hamlet stabs the King, who dies. Laertes confesses, asks Hamlet's forgiveness, and then dies.]

HAMLET: I follow thee. (*He falls*).  
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!  
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,  
That are but mutes or audience to this act,  
Had I but time,—as this fell sergeant, Death,  
Is strict in his arrest,—O! I could tell you,—  
But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;  
Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright  
To the unsatisfied.

HORATIO: Never believe it.  
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;  
Here's yet some liquor left. (*He seizes the cup.*)

HAMLET (*rises*): As thou'rt a man,  
Give me the cup: let go, by Heaven I'll have it! (*He dashes the cup  
to the ground and falls back.*)

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain  
To tell my story. (*March afar off, and shot within.*)

What warlike noise is this?

OSRIC: Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,  
To the ambassadors of England gives  
This warlike volley.

HAMLET: O, I die, Horatio;  
The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit:  
I cannot live to hear the news from England;  
But I do prophesy the election lights  
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;  
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,  
Which have solicited<sup>1</sup>—The rest is silence. (*He dies.*)

From *Hamlet*.

### 3. THE MOOR OF VENICE

[Othello the Moor, commander of Venetian forces, has secretly married Desdemona, daughter of the Senator Brabantio, who has brought him before the Duke in council.]

*Scene—Venice. A Council Chamber*

*Present: DUKE and SENATORS, sitting at a table. BRABANTIO,  
OTHELLO, IAGO, etc.*

OTHELLO: Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,  
My very noble and approved good masters,  
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,  
It is most true; true, I have married her:  
The very head and front of my offending

<sup>1</sup> Incited, prompted.

Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,  
And little blessed with the soft phrase of peace;  
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,  
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have used  
Their dearest action in the tented field;  
And little of this great world can I speak,  
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;  
And, therefore, little shall I grace my cause  
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,  
I will a round unvarnished tale deliver  
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms,  
What conjuration, and what mighty magic,—  
For such proceeding I am charged withal,—  
I won his daughter.

BRABANTIO:           A maiden never bold;  
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion  
Blushed at herself; and she—in spite of nature,  
Of years, of country, credit, everything—  
To fall in love with what she feared to look on!  
It is a judgment maimed and most imperfect  
That will confess perfection so could err  
Against all rules of nature . . .

OTHELLO:               I do beseech you,  
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,<sup>1</sup>  
And let her speak of me before her father:  
If you do find me foul in her report,  
The trust, the office, I do hold of you,  
Not only take away, but let your sentence  
Even fall upon my life.

<sup>1</sup> I.e., the *Frezzeria*, a narrow street, entered from the west end of the Piazza of St. Mark, where the arrow-makers once had their shops. Sabellico a fifteenth-century author, writing the history of Venice in Latin, calls this street *vicus sagittarius*, and Shakespeare may have seen the edition of his work printed at Basle in 1560. Besides *freccia* (or *frezza*) the word *sagitta* was also used for arrow, and it seems that Shakespeare has taken the latter word and added the English suffix. Some editors have suggested that "the Sagittary" was an inn, others that it was part of the Arsenal named from the statue of an archer to be seen there. But there is no mention of such an inn in the abundant records, and the statue was not erected till long after Shakespeare's death. This matter (which has baffled so many commentators) is fully discussed in the *Modern Language Review* (Vol. XXVII, p. 24).

DUKE: Fetch Desdemona hither.

OTHELLO: Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place.

*Exeunt IAGO and attendants.*

And, till she come, as truly as to Heaven  
I do confess the vices of my blood,  
So justly to your grave ears I'll present  
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,  
And she in mine.

DUKE: Say it, Othello.

OTHELLO: Her father loved me; oft invited me;  
Still questioned me the story of my life,  
From year to year,—the battles, sieges, fortunes,  
That I have passed . . . My story being done,  
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:  
She swore,—in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange;  
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:  
She wished she had not heard it; yet she wished  
That Heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me;  
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,  
I should but teach him how to tell my story,  
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake.  
She loved me for the dangers I had passed,  
And I loved her that she did pity them.  
This only is the witchcraft I have used:  
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.  
DUKE: I think this tale would win my daughter too . . .

*Enter DESDEMONA with IAGO and attendants.*

BRABANTIO: Come hither, gentle mistress:  
Do you perceive in all this noble company  
Where most you owe obedience?

DESDEMONA: My noble father,  
I do perceive here a divided duty:  
To you I am bound for life and education;  
My life and education both do learn me  
How to respect you; you're the lord of duty,—  
I'm hitherto your daughter: but here's my husband;

And so much duty as my mother showed  
To you, preferring you before her father,  
So much I challenge that I may profess  
Due to the Moor my lord.

BRABANTIO:                    God be wi' you.—I have done.  
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs:  
I had rather to adopt a child than get it.—  
Come hither, Moor:  
I here do give thee that with all my heart,  
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart  
I would keep from thee . . . I have done, my lord.

[Othello is sent to defend Cyprus against the Turks. Desdemona, sailing on another ship, reaches the island first, along with Cassio, the General's lieutenant and Iago, his ensign, and welcomes her husband on his arrival.]

*Scene—A sea-port town in Cyprus. A platform*

*Present: DESDEMONA, CASSIO, IAGO and others. Enter OTHELLO and attendants.*

OTHELLO: O my fair warrior!

DESDEMONA:                    My dear Othello!

OTHELLO: It gives me wonder great as my content,  
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!  
If after every tempest come such calms,  
May the winds blow till they have wakened death;  
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,  
Olympus-high, and duck again as low  
As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,  
'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear,  
My soul hath her content so absolute,  
That not another comfort like to this  
Succeeds in unknown fate.

DESDEMONA:                    The heavens forbid  
But that our loves and comforts should increase,  
Even as our days do grow!

OTHELLO: Amen to that, sweet powers!  
I cannot speak enough of this content;  
It stops me here; it is too much of joy:  
And this, and this, the greatest discords be (*kissing her*)  
That e'er our hearts shall make! . . .

*Exeunt. IAGO is left alone.*

IAGO: That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it;  
That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit;  
The Moor—howbeit that I endure him not—  
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature;  
And, I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona  
A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too; . . .  
And nothing can or shall content my soul,  
Till I am evened with him, wife for wife;<sup>1</sup>  
Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor  
At least into a jealousy so strong  
That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do, . . .  
Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,  
For making him egregiously an ass,  
And practising upon his peace and quiet  
Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confused:  
Knavery's plain face is never seen till used.

[Iago makes Cassio drunk, and engineers a quarrel between him and Montano, a Venetian, in the hall of the castle, where Cassio is in command of the guard. They fight, and Montano is wounded. The alarm bell rings.]

*Scene—Cyprus. A hall in the Castle*

*Present: CASSIO, MONTANO and IAGO. Enter OTHELLO  
and attendants*

OTHELLO: What is the matter here?

MONTANO: 'Zounds, I bleed still: I am hurt to the death.

OTHELLO: Hold, for your lives!

IAGO: Hold, ho! Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—gentlemen!—  
Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?  
Hold! the general speaks to you; hold, hold, for shame!

<sup>1</sup> Iago wrongly suspects that Othello has been the lover of his wife, Emilia.



OTHELLO: Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?  
Are we turned Turks, and to ourselves do that  
Which Heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?  
For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:  
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage  
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion.—  
Silence that dreadful bell! it frights the isle  
From her propriety.—What is the matter, masters?—  
Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,  
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

IAGO: I do not know . . . I found them close together,  
At blow and thrust, even as again they were  
When you yourself did part them.  
More of this matter can not I report:—  
But men are men: the best sometimes forget:—  
Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,  
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,  
Yet surely Cassio, I believe, received  
From him that fled some strange indignity,  
Which patience could not pass.

OTHELLO: I know, Iago,  
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,  
Making it light to Cassio.—Cassio, I love thee;  
But never more be officer of mine.—

*Enter DESDEMONA, attended.*

Look, if my gentle love be not raised up!  
I'll make thee an example.

DESDEMONA: What's the matter?

OTHELLO: All's well now, sweeting; come away to bed.—  
Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon:—  
Lead him off. (*MONTANO is led off.*)  
Iago, look with care about the town,  
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.—  
Come, Desdemona; 'tis the soldiers' life,  
To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

*Exeunt. IAGO is left alone.*

IAGO: When devils will the blackest sins put on  
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,  
As I do now; for whiles this honest fool  
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,  
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,  
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,—  
That she repeals him for her body's lust,  
And, by how much she strives to do him good,  
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.  
•So will I turn her virtue into pitch;  
And out of her own goodness make the net  
That shall enmesh them all.

*Scene—Cyprus. Garden of the Castle*

*Present: DESDEMONA, CASSIO and EMILIA, wife of IAGO.*

DESDEMONA: Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do  
All my abilities in thy behalf.

EMILIA: Good madam, do: I warrant it grieves my husband  
As if the case were his.

DESDEMONA: O, that's an honest fellow.—Do not doubt, Cassio,  
But I will have my lord and you again  
As friendly as you were.

CASSIO:                               Bounteous madam,  
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,  
He's never anything but your true servant. (*Exit.*) . . .

*Enter OTHELLO and IAGO, at a distance.*

OTHELLO: Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

IAGO: Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think it,  
That he would steal away so guilty-like,  
Seeing you coming.

OTHELLO:                       I do believe 'twas he.

DESDEMONA: How now, my lord?  
I have been talking with a suitor here,  
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

OTHELLO: Who is't you mean?

DESDEMONA: Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,  
If I have any grace, or power to move you,  
His present reconciliation take;  
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,  
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,  
I have no judgment in an honest face.  
I pr'ythee, call him back.

OTHELLO: Went he hence now?

DESDEMONA: Ay, sooth; so humbled,  
That he hath left part of his grief with me,  
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

OTHELLO: Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time. . . .

DESDEMONA: Why then, to-morrow night; or Tuesday morn;  
On Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn.—  
I pr'ythee, name the time, but let it not  
Exceed three days; in faith, he's penitent. . . .

OTHELLO: Pr'ythee, no more: let him come when he will;  
I will deny thee nothing. . . .

*Exit DESDEMONA with EMILIA.*

OTHELLO: Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,  
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,  
Chaos is come again.

IAGO: My noble lord,—

OTHELLO: What dost thou say, Iago?

IAGO: Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,  
Know of your love?

OTHELLO: He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?

IAGO: But for a satisfaction of my thought;  
No further harm.

OTHELLO: Why of thy thought, Iago?

IAGO: I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

OTHELLO: O, yes; and went between us very oft.

IAGO: Indeed?

OTHELLO: Indeed! ay, indeed: discern'st thou aught in that?  
Is he not honest?

IAGO: Honest, my lord?

OTHELLO: Honest! ay, honest.

IAGO: My lord, for aught I know.

OTHELLO: What dost thou think?

IAGO: Think, my lord?

OTHELLO: Think, my lord!

By Heaven, he echoes me,

As if there were some monster in his thought

Too hideous to be shown.—Thou dost mean something . . .

By Heaven, I'll know thy thoughts . . .

IAGO: I would not have your free and noble nature,

Out of self-bounty, be abused: look to't.

I know our country disposition well;

In Venice they do let Heaven see the pranks

They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience

Is—not to leave't undone, but keep't unknown.

OTHELLO: Dost thou say so?

IAGO: She did deceive her father, marrying you;

And, when she seemed to shake and fear your looks,

She loved them most.

OTHELLO: And so she did.

IAGO: Why, go to, then;

She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,

To seel<sup>1</sup> her father's eyes up close as oak,—

He thought 'twas witchcraft:—but I'm much to blame;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon

For too much loving you.

OTHELLO: I am bound to thee for ever.

IAGO: I see this hath a little dashed your spirits . . .

OTHELLO: No, not much moved.—

I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

IAGO: Long live she so! and long live you to think so! (*Exit.*)

OTHELLO: This fellow's of exceeding honesty,

And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,

Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To close up, as the eyes of a hawk.

<sup>2</sup> Wild. The whole sentence refers to falconry. The falconer always let fly the hawk against the wind; but, if to be dismissed, it would be let fly "down the wind".

Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,  
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,  
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black,  
And have not those soft parts of conversation  
That chamberers have; or, for I am declined  
Into the vale of years— . . . Desdemona comes!  
If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!—  
I'll not believe it.

*Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*

DESDEMONA:       How now, my dear Othello?  
Your dinner, and the generous islanders  
By you invited, do attend your presence.

OTHELLO: I am to blame.

DESDEMONA: Why do you speak so faintly?  
Are you not well?

OTHELLO: I have a pain upon my forehead here.

DESDEMONA: 'Faith, that's with watching; 'twill away again:  
Let me but bind it hard, within this hour  
It will be well.

OTHELLO:       Your napkin is too little. (*He puts the handkerchief  
from him, and she drops it.*)  
Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

DESDEMONA: I'm very sorry that you are not well.

*Exeunt OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.*

[The handkerchief was Desdemona's first remembrance from Othello. Emilia now picks it up. Iago re-enters and snatches it from her.]

*Exit EMILIA. Re-enter OTHELLO.*

IAGO: Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandragora,  
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,  
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep  
Which thou owedst yesterday.

OTHELLO:                       Ha! ha! false to me.

IAGO: Why, how now, general? no more of that.

OTHELLO: Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack.—  
I swear, 'tis better to be much abused  
Than but to know't a little. . . .

IAGO: I am sorry to hear this.

•OTHELLO: I had been happy, if the general camp,  
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,  
So I had nothing known. O now, for ever,  
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!  
Farewell the pluméd troop, and the big wars,  
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell!  
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,  
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,  
The royal banner, and all quality,  
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!  
And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats  
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,  
Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!

IAGO: Is't possible, my lord,— . . . Is't come to this? . . .

OTHELLO: By the world,  
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;  
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not:  
I'll have some proof . . . I'll not endure it.—  
Would I were satisfied!

IAGO: I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion.  
I do repent me that I put it to you.  
You would be satisfied?

OTHELLO:                               Would! nay, I will. . . .

[Iago then tells Othello that recently Cassio lay with him and talked in his sleep, disclosing by his words and movements the fact that he and Desdemona were lovers. He also tells him that he has seen Desdemona's handkerchief in Cassio's hand.]

OTHELLO: Now do I see 'tis true.—Look here, Iago;  
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven:  
'Tis gone.—  
Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!

Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne  
To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,  
For 'tis of aspics' tongues!

IAGO: Yet be content.

OTHELLO: O, blood, blood, blood!

IAGO: Patience, I say; your mind perhaps may change.

OTHELLO: Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,  
Whose icy current and compulsive course  
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on  
To the Propontic and the Hellespont;  
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,  
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,  
Till that a capable and wide revenge  
Swallow them up. . . . Now thou art my lieutenant.  
IAGO: I am your own for ever.

[At her next meeting with Othello Desdemona again pleads Cassio's cause. Othello interrupts her and asks for the handkerchief. Desdemona tells him she has not got it about her, and he leaves her abruptly.]

*Scene—Cyprus. Before the Castle*

*Present: DESDEMONA, CASSIO, IAGO and EMILIA.*

IAGO: Is my lord angry?

EMILIA: He went hence but now,  
And certainly, in strange unquietness.

IAGO: Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,  
When it hath blown his ranks into the air,  
And, like the devil, from his very arm  
Puffed his own brother;—and can he be angry?  
Something of moment, then: I will go meet him.  
There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry.

DESDEMONA: I pr'ythee, do so. (*Exit IAGO.*) Something, sure, of state—

Either from Venice, or some unhatched practice,  
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him—  
Hath puddled his clear spirit . . .

EMILIA: Pray Heaven it be state matters, as you think,  
And no conception nor no jealous toy  
Concerning you.

DESDEMONA: Alas the day, I never gave him cause.

EMILIA: But jealous souls will not be answered so;  
They are not ever jealous for the cause,  
But jealous for they are jealous: 'tis a monster  
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

DESDEMONA: Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind!

EMILIA: Lady, Amen.

DESDEMONA: I will go seek him.—Cassio, walk hereabout:  
If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,  
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

CASSIO: I humbly thank your ladyship.

[Iago now plays another knavish trick. Cassio, having found the handkerchief in his chamber (placed there by Iago), has given it to a woman of the town. Iago arranges that Othello be at hand to overhear Cassio talking lightly with him about this woman. Othello falls into the trap, and believes the conversation is about Desdemona.]

*Scene—Cyprus. A room in the Castle*

*Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.*

OTHELLO: You have seen nothing then?

EMILIA: Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect . . .

OTHELLO: Bid her come hither:—go.—(*Exit EMILIA.*)

She says enough;—yet she's a simple bawd  
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,  
A closet-lock-and-key of villainous secrets:  
And yet she'll kneel, and pray; I've seen her do't.

*Re-enter EMILIA with DESDEMONA.*

DESDEMONA: My lord, what is your will?

OTHELLO:

Pray, chuck, come hither.

DESDEMONA: What is your pleasure?



OTHELLO: Let me see your eyes;  
Look in my face.

DESDEMONA: What horrible fancy's this?

OTHELLO (*to EMILIA*): Some of your function, mistress;  
Leave procreants alone and shut the door;  
Cough or cry hem if anybody come:  
Your mystery, your mystery;—nay, despatch. (*Exit EMILIA.*)

DESDEMONA: Upon my knees, what doth your speech import?  
I understand a fury in your words,  
But not the words.

OTHELLO: Why, what art thou?

DESDEMONA: Your wife, my lord; your true and loyal wife. . . .  
I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

•OTHELLO: O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,  
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,  
Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,  
That the sense aches at thee,—would thou had'st ne'er been born!

DESDEMONA: Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed? . . .

OTHELLO: Are you not a strumpet?

DESDEMONA: No, as I am a Christian . . .

OTHELLO: I cry you mercy then:  
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,  
That married with Othello.—(*Raising his voice.*) You, mistress,  
That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,  
And keep the gate of hell!

*Re-enter EMILIA.*

You, you, ay, you:  
We have done our course; there's money for your pains.  
I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel. (*Exit.*)

EMILIA: Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?  
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

DESDEMONA: 'Faith, half asleep.

EMILIA: Good madam, what's the matter with my lord?

DESDEMONA: With who?



DESDEMONA: So would not I: my love doth so approve him,  
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns,—  
Pr'ythee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.

EMILIA: I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

DESDEMONA: All's one,—Good faith, how foolish are our minds!  
If I do die before thee, pr'ythee shroud me  
In one of those same sheets.

EMILIA: Come, come, you talk.

DESDEMONA: My mother had a maid called Barbara:  
She was in love; and he she loved proved mad,  
And did forsake her: she had a song of "willow";  
An old thing 'twas, but it expressed her fortune,  
And she died singing it: that song, to-night,  
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do,  
But to go hang my head all at one side,  
And sing it like poor Barbara. Pr'ythee, despatch.

EMILIA: Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

DESDEMONA: No, unpin me here. . . (*Singing*)

*The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree;*

*Sing all a green willow!*

*Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee;*

*Sing willow, willow, willow! . . .*

Lay by these.—

*Sing willow, willow, willow! . . .*

Pr'ythee, hie thee: he'll come anon. . . . So get thee gone; good  
night.

*Scene—A bedchamber*

DESDEMONA *in bed asleep. A light burning. Enter OTHELLO.*

OTHELLO: It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—  
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!—  
It is the cause!—Yet I'll not shed her blood;  
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,  
And smooth as monumental alabaster.  
Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.

Put out the light, and then,—put out the light:  
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,  
I can again thy former light restore  
Should I repent me; but once put out thy light,  
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,  
I know not where is that Promethean heat  
That can thy light relume. When I have plucked the rose,  
I cannot give it vital growth again,  
It needs must wither:—I'll smell it on the tree.—(*Kissing her.*)  
O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade  
Justice to break her sword!—One more, one more.—  
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,  
And love thee after.—One more, and this the last.  
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,  
But they are cruel tears: this sorrow's heavenly;  
It strikes where it doth love.—She wakes.

DESDEMONA: Who's there? Othello?

OTHELLO: Ay, Desdemona.

DESDEMONA: Will you come to bed, my lord?

OTHELLO: Have you prayed to-night, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA: Ay, my lord.

OTHELLO: If you bethink yourself of any crime,  
Unreconciled as yet to Heaven and grace,  
Solicit for it straight.

DESDEMONA: Alas, my lord, what do you mean by that?

OTHELLO: Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:  
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;  
No,—Heaven forbid!—I would not kill thy soul.

DESDEMONA: Talk you of killing?

OTHELLO: Ay, I do.

DESDEMONA: Then Heaven  
Have mercy on me!

OTHELLO: Amen, with all my heart! . . .

DESDEMONA: O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

OTHELLO: Down, strumpet!

DESDEMONA: Kill me to-morrow; let me live to-night.

OTHELLO: Nay, if you strive,—

DESDEMONA: But half an hour!

OTHELLO: Being done, there is no pause.

DESDEMONA: But while I say one prayer.

OTHELLO: It is too late. (*He stifles her.*)

EMILIA (*within*): My lord, my lord! what, ho! my lord, my lord!

OTHELLO: What noise is this?—Not dead? not yet quite dead!

I, that am cruel, am yet merciful;

I would not have thee linger in thy pain.—

So, so.

EMILIA (*within*): What, ho! my lord, my lord!

OTHELLO: Who's there?

EMILIA (*within*): O, good my lord! I would speak a word with you.

OTHELLO: Yes:—'tis Emilia;—by-and-by.—She's dead.—

I had forgot thee. O, come in, Emilia . . . (*Unlocks the door.*)

*Enter EMILIA.*

EMILIA: Alas! what cry is that?

OTHELLO: That! what?

EMILIA: Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice:—

Help! help, ho! help!—O lady, speak again!

Sweet Desdemona! O, sweet mistress, speak!

DESDEMONA: A guiltless death I die.

EMILIA: O, who hath done this deed?

DESDEMONA: Nobody; I myself. Farewell:

Commend me to my kind lord. O, farewell!

*From Othello.*

[Iago's villainy is exposed and Desdemona's innocence made clear. Othello sees that he has "thrown a pearl away," and kills himself.]

#### 4. THE BLANKET OF THE DARK

*Scene—Inverness. MACBETH'S Castle*

*Present: LADY MACBETH. Enter a Messenger.*

**LADY MACBETH:** What is your tidings?

**MESSENGER:** The king comes here to-night.

LADY MACBETH:                                   Thou'rt mad to say it:  
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,  
Would have informed for preparation.

MESSANGER: So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:  
One of my fellows had the speed of him,  
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more  
Than would make up his message.

LADY MACBETH: Give him tending;  
He brings great news. (*Exit MESSENGER.*)

The raven himself is hoarse  
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;  
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,  
Wherever in your sightless substances  
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,  
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,  
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,  
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

*Scene—The same. Before the Castle*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter KING DUNCAN, with his train and  
BANQUO, a general of his army.*

DUNCAN: This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO:                   This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,  
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath  
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,  
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird  
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:  
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed  
The air is delicate.

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

DUNCAN:                See, see, our honoured hostess!  
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,  
Which still we thank as love. . . . Give me your hand;  
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,  
And shall continue in<sup>1</sup> our graces towards him.  
By your leave, hostess. (*Exeunt.*)

*Scene—Court within the Castle*

*Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE, his son, bearing a torch before him.*

BANQUO: How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE: The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO: And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE:                                   I take't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO: Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;  
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.  
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,

<sup>1</sup> The addition of this word to complete the line is an emendation suggested by the Editor of the Arden Shakespeare. The expression "continue in" is common in Shakespeare.

And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,  
Restrain in me the curséd thoughts that nature  
Gives way to in repose!

*Enter MACBETH, and a SERVANT with a torch.*

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

MACBETH: A friend.

BANQUO: What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed: . . .  
All's well . . .

MACBETH: Good repose the while!

BANQUO: Thanks, sir: the like to you!

*Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE.*

- MACBETH: Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. (*Exit SERVANT.*)  
Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppresséd brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable  
As this which now I draw.  
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;  
And such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,  
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;  
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:  
It is the bloody business which informs  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one-half world  
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse  
The curtained sleep; witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Hecate's offerings, and withered murder,  
Alarumed by his sentinel the wolf,  
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design



Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,  
And take the present horror from the time,  
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat he lives:  
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

*A bell rings.*

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.  
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

*Scene—The same*

*Present: LADY MACBETH. Enter MACBETH.*

**MACBETH:** I have done the deed—Didst thou not hear a noise?

**LADY MACBETH:** I heard the owl scream, and the crickets cry. . . .

• **MACBETH:** Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more! Macbeth doth murder sleep," the innocent sleep, Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleave<sup>1</sup> of care, The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath, Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

**LADY MACBETH:** What do you mean?

**MACBETH:** Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house:  
"Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor  
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."

LADY MACBETH: Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,  
You do unbend your noble strength, to think  
So brainsickly of things . . . (*Knocking within.*)

**MACBETH:** Whence is that knocking?  
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?  
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.  
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red.

<sup>1</sup> Skein (of silk).

LADY MACBETH: My hands are of your colour; but I shame  
To wear a heart so white . . . Retire we to our chamber:  
A little water clears us of this deed . . .

MACBETH: To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.  
(*Knocking within.*)

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

*Scene—The same*

*Knocking within. Enter a PORTER.*

PORTER: Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. (*Knocking within.*) Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. (*Knocking within.*) Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O come in, equivocator. (*Knocking within.*) Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. (*Knocking within.*) Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. (*Knocking within.*) Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter. (*Opens the gate.*)

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX, noblemen of Scotland.*

MACDUFF: Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,  
That you do lie so late?

PORTER: Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock. . . .

MACDUFF: Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH.*

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

LENNOX: Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH: Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF: Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH: Not yet.

MACDUFF: He did command me to call timely on him: I have almost slipped the hour.

MACBETH: I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF: I know this is a joyful trouble to you;  
But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH: The labour we delight in physics pain.  
This is the door.

MACDUFF: I'll make so bold to call,  
For 'tis my limited service. (*Exit.*)

LENNOX: Goes the king hence to-day?

MACBETH: He does: he did appoint so.

LENNOX: The night has been unruly; where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,  
Lamentings heard i' the air, strange screams of death,  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatched to the woeful time: the obscure bird  
Clamoured the livelong night: some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH: 'Twas a rough night.

[The news of the King's murder has quickly spread, and suspicion has fallen upon Macbeth. Duncan's son and heir, Malcolm, having fled to England, Macbeth is crowned King. But there are still Banquo and his son Fleance to be reckoned with, and Macbeth determines to invite them to a feast and have them murdered on the way to his Palace at Forres.]

*Scene—Forres. A room in the Palace*

*Present: MACBETH and LADY MACBETH.*

MACBETH: O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!  
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

LADY MACBETH: But in them nature's copy's<sup>1</sup> not eterne.

<sup>1</sup> An example of Shakespeare's remarkable knowledge of the law. The allusion is to the English "copyhold" system of land tenure.

MACBETH: There's comfort yet; they are assailable:  
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown  
His cloistered flight; ere to black Hecate's summons  
The shard-borne beetle, with his drowsy hums,  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH: What's to be done?

MACBETH: Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling<sup>1</sup> night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,  
And, with thy bloody and invisible hand,  
Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond  
Which keeps me pale!—Light thickens; and the crow  
Makes wing to the rooky wood;  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,  
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.  
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;  
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.  
So, prithee, go with me. (*Exeunt.*)

[Banquo has been murdered as planned, but his son Fleance has escaped. At the feast Banquo's ghost has appeared to Macbeth, who has been rebuked by his wife for showing terror at the sight of this apparition. But Lady Macbeth is the first to break down, and she has been walking in her sleep.]

Scene<sup>•</sup>—Dunsinane. Ante-room in the Castle

Present: A DOCTOR OF PHYSIC and a WAITING-GENTLEWOMAN.

*Enter* LADY MACBETH, with a taper.

GENTLEWOMAN: Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her—stand close.

DOCTOR: How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN: Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

<sup>1</sup> A reference to falconry. To "seel" was to sew up the eyelids of a hawk (cf. p. 149).

DOCTOR: You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN: Ay, but their sense is shut.

DOCTOR: What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

GENTLEWOMAN: It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH: Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR: Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH: Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One: two: why, then 'tis time to do't.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

DOCTOR: Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH: The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR: Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN: She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH: Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

DOCTOR: What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

GENTLEWOMAN: I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

DOCTOR: Well, well, well,—

GENTLEWOMAN: Pray God it be, sir.

DOCTOR: This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

LADY MACBETH: Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

DOCTOR: Even so?

LADY MACBETH: To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed! (*Exit.*)

[Malcolm, having raised an army in England, is now advancing to besiege the Castle of Dunsinane.]

*Scene—Dunsinane. Within the Castle*

*Enter* MACBETH, SEYTON (*an officer in attendance*), and SOLDIERS *with drum and colours.*

MACBETH: Hang out our banners on the outward walls:  
The cry is still "They come"; our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up:  
Were they not forced<sup>1</sup> with those that should be ours,  
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
And beat them backward home. (*A cry of women within.*)  
What is that noise?

SEYTON: It is the cry of women, my good lord. (*Exit.*)

MACBETH: I have almost forgot the taste of fears:  
The time has been, my senses would have cooled  
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair<sup>2</sup>  
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
As life were in't: I have supped full with horrors;  
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
Cannot once start me.

*Re-enter* SEYTON

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON: The queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH: She should have died hereafter;  
There would have been a time for such a word.  
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,

<sup>1</sup> Strengthened, reinforced.

<sup>2</sup> Fell of hair = unkempt hair of head (*O.E.D.*).

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
To the last syllable of recorded time,  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty<sup>1</sup> death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing. . . .  
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,  
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.—  
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!  
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

From *Macbeth*.

[Macbeth sallies out, offers battle before the Castle, and is slain.]

## 5. THE OLD KING

[Lear, King of Britain, in his old age determined to divide his kingdom between his three daughters, and called them before him that he might judge of their filial affection and give most to the daughter who loved him best. Goneril (the eldest) declared that she prized her father no less than life, and Regan (his second daughter) protested that she had no joy but in her love for him. Actually, Cordelia (the youngest) was the only one of the three who loved her father at all; but when her turn came to speak she was so disgusted with the false words of her sisters that she said she loved her father according to her duty. The old King, mistaking flattery for truth and truth for ingratitude, flew into a passion, divided the whole kingdom between Goneril and Regan, and cast off his youngest daughter, who had hitherto been his favourite child. The Earl of Kent, having protested on Cordelia's behalf, was condemned to banishment. Cordelia became the wife of the King of France, who, perceiving her virtues, was willing to take her without a dowry]

Lear's folly was soon to reap its reward. Goneril and Regan, once they became possessed of the royal power and property, showed their

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable (as is suggested by Theobald, Warburton and others) that Shakespeare wrote *dusky* here, the printed word *dusty* being a typographical error.

true characters, and treated their father with cruelty and contempt. Lear had reserved for his attendance a company of a hundred knights; but these are denied him, and he has now (Cordelia being absent) no friends left him but the Earls of Kent and Gloucester and Gloucester's son Edgar, and no attendant but his faithful fool. Broken in mind and body, the old man cries out to heaven.]

*Scene—Before Gloucester's Castle*

*Present:* LEAR, GLOUCESTER, GONERIL, REGAN and her husband,  
the DUKE OF CORNWALL and others.

LEAR: You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,  
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!  
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts  
Against their father, fool me not so much  
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,  
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,  
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,  
I will have such revenges on you both,  
That all the world shall—I will do such things—  
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be  
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;  
No, I'll not weep:  
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart  
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,  
Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!

*Exeunt* LEAR, GLOUCESTER and FOOL. *Storm and tempest.*

CORNWALL: Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm . . .

*Re-enter* GLOUCESTER.

GLOUCESTER: The king is in high rage.

CORNWALL: Whither is he going?

GLOUCESTER: He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

CORNWALL: 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

GONERIL: My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

GLOUCESTER: Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds  
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about  
There's scarce a bush.



REGAN: O, sir, to wilful men,  
The injuries that they themselves procure  
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors:  
He is attended with a desperate train;  
And what they may incense him to, being apt  
To have his ear abused, wisdom bids fear.

CORNWALL: Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night:  
My Regan counsels well. Come out o' the storm. (*Exeunt.*)

*Scene—A heath. Storm and tempest*

*Enter LEAR and FOOL.*

• LEAR: Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout  
Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!<sup>1</sup>  
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,  
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,  
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,  
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!  
Crack nature's moulds, all germens<sup>2</sup> spill at once,  
That make ingrateful man!

FOOL: O nuncle, court holy-water<sup>3</sup> in a dry house is better than  
this rainwater out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughter's  
blessing: here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

LEAR: Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!  
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:  
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;  
I never gave you kingdom, called you children,  
You owe me no subscription: then let fall  
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,  
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man,—  
But yet I call you servile ministers,  
That have with two pernicious daughters joined  
Your high-engendered battles 'gainst a head  
So old and white as this! O! O! 'tis foul! . . .

*Enter KENT.*

<sup>1</sup> I.e., weathercocks.    <sup>2</sup> Fruitful seeds.    <sup>3</sup> Court holy-water = flattery.

**FOOL:** Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece; that's a wise man and a fool.

**KENT:** Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night  
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies  
Gallow<sup>1</sup> the very wanderers of the dark,  
And make them keep their caves: since I was man,  
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,  
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never  
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry  
The affliction nor the fear.

• LEAR:                    Let the great gods,  
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,  
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,  
That hast within thee undivulgéd crimes,  
Unwhipped of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;  
Thou perjured, and thou simular<sup>2</sup> man of virtue  
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,  
That under covert and convenient seeming  
Hast practised on man's life: close pent-up guilts,  
Rive your concealing continents, and cry  
These dreadful summoners grace.—I am a man  
More sinned against than sinning.

KENT: Alack, bare-headed!  
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;  
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:  
Repose you there; while I to this hard house—  
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;  
Which even but now, demanding after you,  
Denied me to come in—return, and force  
Their scantred courtesy.

LEAR: My wits begin to turn.—  
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?  
I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow?  
The art of our necessities is strange,  
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.—

<sup>1</sup> Terrify.

## <sup>2</sup> Disassembling

**FOOL** (*singing*):

*He that has and a little tiny wit,—  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,—  
Must make content with his fortunes fit,  
For the rain it raineth every day.*

*Scene—The heath, before a hovel*

*Enter* LEAR, KENT *and* FOOL.

**KENT:** Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:  
The tyranny of the open night's too rough  
For nature to endure. (*Storm still.*)

**LEAR:** Let me alone.

**KENT:** Good my lord, enter here.

**LEAR:** Wilt break my heart?

**KENT:** I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.

• LEAR: Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm  
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;  
But where the greater malady is fixed,  
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'ldst shun a bear;  
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,  
Thou'ldst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's free,  
The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind  
Doth from my senses take all feeling else  
Save what beats there.—Filial ingratitude!  
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand  
For lifting food to't?—But I will punish home:—  
No, I will weep no more.—In such a night  
To shut me out!—Pour on; I will endure:—  
In such a night as this! O Regan, Gonerill!—  
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—  
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;  
No more of that . . .

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,  
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,  
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,  
Your looped and windowed raggedness, defend you  
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en  
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;  
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,  
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,  
And show the heavens more just.

EDGAR (*within*): Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom.

FOOL: Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit. Help me, help me!

KENT: Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

FOOL: A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

KENT: What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw? Come forth.

*Enter EDGAR disguised as a madman.*

EDGAR: Away! the foul fiend follows me!—

Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.—  
Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

LEAR: Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?  
And art thou come to this? . . .

FOOL: This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

*Scene—A Chamber in a farmhouse*

*Enter GLOUCESTER, LEAR, KENT, FOOL, and EDGAR still disguised.*

GLOUCESTER: Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully.  
I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can; I will not  
be long from you.

KENT: All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience;  
the gods reward your kindness! (*Exit GLOUCESTER.*)

EDGAR: Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the  
lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

FOOL: Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman  
or a yeoman?

LEAR: A king, a king!

FOOL: No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

LEAR: To have a thousand with red burning spits come hissing in upon 'em,—

EDGAR: The foul fiend bites my back.

•FOOL: He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

LEAR: It shall be done; I will arraign them straight (*To EDGAR*) Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer; (*To FOOL*) Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!

EDGAR: Look, where he stands and glares! Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?

*Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me—*

FOOL:

*Her boat hath a leak,*

*And she must not speak,*

*Why she dares not come over to thee.*

EDGAR: The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

KENT: How do you, sir? Stand you not so amazed;  
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

LEAR: I'll see their trial first. Bring in the evidence. . . . Arraign her first. 'Tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

FOOL: Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

LEAR: She cannot deny it.

FOOL: Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

LEAR: And here's another, whose warped looks proclaim  
What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!  
Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!  
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

EDGAR: Bless thy five wits!

KENT: O pity! Sir, where is the patience now,  
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

EDGAR: (*aside*): My tears begin to take his part so much,  
They'll mar my counterfeiting.

LEAR: The little dogs and all,  
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

EDGAR: Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs! . . .

LEAR: Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?  
(*To EDGAR*) You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments; you will say they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.

KENT: Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.

LEAR: Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains; so, so, so.  
We'll go to supper i' the morning. So, so, so.

FOOL: And I'll go to bed at noon.

*Re-enter GLOUCESTER.*

GLOUCESTER: Come hither, friend. Where is the king my master?

KENT: Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

[Cordelia, having learned from Kent of her father's sufferings, has now landed in England with a French army. Lear has been found in a pitiable condition and brought into the French camp.]

*Scene—A tent in the French camp, in England*

LEAR *on a bed asleep, soft music playing, GENTLEMAN and others attending. Enter CORDELIA, KENT and DOCTOR.*

CORDELIA: O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,  
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,  
And every measure fail me.

KENT: To be acknowledged, madam, is o'erpaid.  
All my reports go with the modest truth:  
No more nor clipped, but so.

CORDELIA: Be better suited:  
These weeds are memories of those worser hours:  
I prithee, put them off.

KENT: Pardon me, dear madam;  
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:  
My boon I make it, that you know me not  
Till time and I think meet.

CORDELIA: Then be't so, my good lord. (*To the DOCTOR*) How does the king?

DOCTOR: Madam, sleeps still.

CORDELIA: O you kind gods,  
Cure this great breach in his abuséd nature!  
The untuned and jarring senses, O, wind-up  
Of this child-changéd father!

DOCTOR: So please your majesty  
That we may wake the king: he hath slept long.

CORDELIA: Be governed by your knowledge, and proceed  
I' the sway of your own will. Is he arrayed?

GENTLEWOMAN: Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep  
We put fresh garments on him.

DOCTOR: Be by, good madam; when we do awake him;  
I doubt not of his temperance.

CORDELIA: Very well.

DOCTOR: Please you, draw near. Louder the music there!

CORDELIA: O my dear father! Restoration hang  
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss  
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters  
Have in thy reverence made!

KENT: Kind and dear princess!

CORDELIA: Had you not been their father, these white flakes  
Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face  
To be opposed against the warring winds?  
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?  
In the most terrible and nimble stroke  
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch—poor perdu!<sup>1</sup>—  
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,  
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night  
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,

<sup>1</sup> Soldier sent in a forlorn hope.

To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,  
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!  
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once  
Had not concluded all. He wakes; speak to him.

DOCTOR: Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

CORDELIA: How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?

LEAR: You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:  
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound  
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears  
Do scald like molten lead.

CORDELIA: Sir, do you know me?

LEAR: You are a spirit, I know; when did you die?

CORDELIA: Still, still, far wide!

DOCTOR: He's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.

LEAR: Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?  
I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity,  
To see another thus. I know not what to say.  
I will not swear these are my hands: let's see;  
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured  
Of my condition.

CORDELIA: O, look upon me, sir,  
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:  
No, sir, you must not kneel.

LEAR: Pray, do not mock me:  
I am a very foolish fond old man,  
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;  
And, to deal plainly,  
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.  
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;  
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant  
What place this is; and all the skill I have  
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not  
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;  
For, as I am a man, I think this lady  
To be my child Cordelia.

CORDELIA: And so I am, I am.



LEAR: Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith, I pray, weep not:  
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.  
I know you do not love me; for your sisters  
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:  
You have some cause, they have not.

CORDELIA: No cause, no cause.

LEAR: Am I in France?

KENT: In your own kingdom, sir.

LEAR: Do not abuse me.

DOCTOR: Be comforted, good madam; the great rage,  
You see, is killed in him: and yet it is danger  
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.  
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more  
Till further settling.

CORDELIA: Will't please your highness walk?

LEAR: You must bear with me:

Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.

[The French army is defeated by the forces of Goneril and Regan, and Lear and Cordelia have been taken. The Duke of Albany has intervened to save the lives of the royal prisoners, but Cordelia has already been strangled.]

*Scene—The British camp, near Dover*

*Present:* ALBANY, KENT, EDGAR, and CAPTAIN. *Enter* LEAR, *with*  
*CORDELIA dead in his arms.*

•LEAR: Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:  
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so  
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!  
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;  
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;  
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,  
Why, then she lives.

KENT: Is this the promised end?

EDGAR: Or image of that horror?

ALBANY: Fall, and cease!

LEAR: This feather stirs; She lives! if it be so,  
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows  
That ever I have felt.

KENT (*kneeling*): O my good master!

LEAR: Prithee, away.

EDGAR: 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

LEAR: A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!  
I might have saved her; now she's gone for ever!  
Cordelia! Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!

What is't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,  
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.  
I killed the slave that was a-hanging thee.

CAPTAIN: 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

LEAR: Did I not, fellow?  
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion  
I would have made them skip: I am old now,  
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you?  
Mine eyes are not o' the best: I'll tell you straight.

KENT: If fortune brag of two she loved and hated,  
One of them we behold.

LEAR: This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?

KENT: The same,  
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?<sup>1</sup>

LEAR: He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;  
He'll strike, and quickly too: he's dead and rotten.

KENT: No, my good lord; I am the very man,—

LEAR: I'll see that straight.

KENT: That, from your first of difference and decay,  
Have followed your sad steps.

LEAR: You are welcome hither.

KENT: Nor no man else: all's cheerless, dark, and deadly.  
Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,  
And desperately are dead.

LEAR: Ay, so I think.

<sup>1</sup> Name assumed by Kent when disguised, in order to serve Lear.



## IV

### FAIRYLAND

- |                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. The Dream            | <i>p.</i> 182 |
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## I. THE DREAM

[In *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, as in Shakespeare's other plays, the characters are Elizabethan persons. We are shown "a wood near Athens," but Bottom the weaver and his companions would be nearer home on the banks of the Avon than in the neighbourhood of the Parthenon. The play (written, perhaps, in the autumn of 1594) was probably first performed at the wedding of some important nobleman. Among the fairy folk Puck stands out prominently, and Bottom is certainly the most substantial of the "human mortals." It is interesting to compare Puck with his fellow-spirit Ariel in *The Tempest*. They are both excellent messengers, but Ariel is engaged on more serious business than Puck. Of the *Dream* Hazlitt has said: "The reading of the play is like wandering in a grove by moonlight."]

*Scene—A Wood near Athens*

*Enter, from opposite sides, a FAIRY and PUCK.*

PUCK: How now, spirit, whither wander you?

•FAIRY: Over hill, over dale,  
Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green:  
The cowslips tall her pensioners<sup>1</sup> be;  
In their gold coats spots you see,—  
Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
In those freckles live their savours;  
I must go seek some dew-drops here and there,<sup>2</sup>  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:  
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

<sup>1</sup> Probably an allusion to Queen Elizabeth's band of gentlemen pensioners who were tall young men.

<sup>2</sup> "Here and there". Hanmer's reading. Globe has "here".

PUCK: The king doth keep his revels here to-night:  
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;  
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,  
Because that she as her attendant hath  
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;  
She never had so sweet a changeling,  
And jealous Oberon would have the child  
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;  
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,  
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy:  
And now they never meet in grove or green,  
By fountain clear or spangled starlight sheen,  
But they do square<sup>1</sup>, that all their elves, for fear,  
Creep into acorn cups and hide them there.

FAIRY: Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Called Robin Good-fellow. Are not you he  
That frights the maidens of the villagery;  
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,  
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;  
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;  
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,  
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:  
Are you not he?

PUCK: I am<sup>2</sup>—thou speak'st aright;  
I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,  
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal;  
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
In very likeness of a roasted crab,  
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob,  
And on her withered dewlap pour the ale.  
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me,

<sup>1</sup> Quarrel.

<sup>2</sup> Following Dr. Johnson, who added these two words to complete the metre.

Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And "tailor"<sup>1</sup> cries, and falls into a cough,  
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh  
And waxen in their mirth and neeze<sup>2</sup> and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there. . .  
But room, good<sup>3</sup> fairy: here comes Oberon.

FAIRY: And here my mistress.—Would that he were gone!

*Enter, from one side, OBERON with his Train, and from the other,*  
*TITANIA with hers.*

OBERON: Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA: What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence;  
I have forsworn his bed and company.

OBERON: Tarry, rash wanton: am I not thy lord? . . .

[Oberon goes on to accuse Titania of being in love with Theseus,  
and Titania replies.]

TITANIA: These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead, \*  
By pavéd fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beachéd margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.<sup>4</sup>  
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,  
As in revenge, have sucked up from the sea  
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land,  
Have every pelting river made so proud,  
That they have overborne their continents:  
The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain,  
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn  
Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard:  
The fold stands empty in the drownéd field,  
And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;

<sup>1</sup> As a term of contempt.

<sup>2</sup> Sneeze.

<sup>3</sup> This word added (Arden Ed.) to complete defective line.

<sup>4</sup> The following lines are said to contain an allusion to the very wet and cold summer recorded as having occurred in the year 1594.

The nine men's morris is filled up with mud:  
 And the quaint mazes in the wanton green  
 For lack of tread are undistinguishable:  
 The human mortals want their winter here;<sup>1</sup>  
 No night is now with hymn or carol blest:—  
 Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,  
 Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
 That rheumatic diseases do abound:  
 •And thorough this distemperature we see  
 The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts  
 Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;  
 And on old Hiems' chin and icy crown  
 An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds  
 Is, as in mockery, set: the spring, the summer,  
 The childing autumn, angry winter, change  
 Their wonted liveries; and the mazéd world,  
 By their increase, now knows not which is which . . .

*Exit TITANIA with her Train.*

OBERON: Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove  
 Till I torment thee for this injury.—  
 My gentle Puck, come hither: thou rememberest  
 Since once I sat upon a promontory  
 And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back  
 Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,  
 That the rude sea grew civil at her song,  
 And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,  
 To hear the sea-maid's music.

PUCK: I remember.

OBERON: That very time I saw—but thou couldst not—  
 Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
 Cupid all armed; a certain aim he took  
 At a fair vestal throned by the west,  
 And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow  
 As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:  
 •But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
 Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon,

<sup>1</sup> Text evidently corrupt. N.S. suggests "gear".



And the imperial votaress<sup>1</sup> passed on,  
 In maiden meditation fancy-free.  
 Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell:  
 It fell upon a little western flower,  
 Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,  
 And maidens call it love-in-idleness.<sup>2</sup>  
 Fetch me that flower; the herb I showed thee once:  
 The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,  
 Will make or man or woman madly dote  
 Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
 Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again  
 Ere the leviathan can swim a league.  
 PUCK: I'll put a girdle round the earth  
 In forty minutes. (*Exit.*)

*Scene—Same*

TITANIA *lying asleep.* Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE,  
 SNOUT and STARVELING.

BOTTOM: Are we all met?

QUINCE: Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.

BOTTOM: Peter Quince,—

QUINCE: What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM: There are things in this comedy of "Pyramus and Thisby"<sup>3</sup> that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself, which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

SNOUT: By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

<sup>1</sup> Evidently a compliment is here intended to Queen Elizabeth, who has been happily called "the crowned Sphinx." This famous passage has given rise to much speculation and conjecture.

<sup>2</sup> Pansy (*Gerard's Herbal*, 1577).

<sup>3</sup> Shakespeare probably found their story in Golding's translation of Ovid (1567).

STARVELING: I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM: Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear.

QUINCE: Well, we will have such a prologue, and it shall be written in eight and six.

BOTTOM: No, make it two more: let it be written in eight and eight.

SNOUT: Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING: I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM: Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in—God shield us—a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to't.

SNOUT: Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

BOTTOM: Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—“Ladies,” or “Fair ladies, I would wish you,” or “I would request you,” or “I would entreat you—not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are”:—and there, indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug, the joiner.

QUINCE: Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things:—that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

SNUG: Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

BOTTOM: A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

QUINCE: Yes, it doth shine that night.

BOTTOM: Why, then you may leave a casement of the great chamber-window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

QUINCE: Ay, or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine.—Then there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

SNOUT: You can never bring in a wall.—What say you, Bottom?

BOTTOM: Some man or other must present Wall; and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

QUINCE: If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake;—and so every one according to his cue.

*Enter PUCK behind.*

•PUCK: What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,  
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?  
What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor;  
An actor, too, perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE: Speak, Pyramus.—Thisby, stand forth.

BOTTOM: "Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,"—

QUINCE: "Odours," "odours."

BOTTOM: "Odours savours sweet:

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby, dear.

But, hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,

And by and by I will to thee appear." (*Exit.*)

PUCK: A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here! (*Exit.*) . . .

*Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head.*

QUINCE: O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted—Pray, masters!—fly, masters!—help! . . . (*Exeunt all except BOTTOM and TITANIA.*)

BOTTOM: Why do they run away? . . . I see their knavery. This is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can. I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. (*Sings*)

*The ousel cock, so black of hue,  
With orange-tawny bill;  
The throstle with his note so true,  
The wren with little quill—*

TITANIA (*awaking*): What angel wakes me from my flowery bed? . . .

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:

Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note;

So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;

And thy fair virtue's force, perforce, doth move me

On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM: Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days:—the more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleeek<sup>1</sup> upon occasion.

TITANIA: Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM: Not so, neither; but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

TITANIA: Out of this wood do not desire to go:

Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.

I am a spirit of no common rate;

The summer still doth tend upon my state;

And I do love thee: therefore, go with me;

I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;

And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,

And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep:

And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,

That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—

Pease-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed! . . .

*Enter four FAIRIES.*

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman:

Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;

Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,

With purple grapes, green figs and mulberries.

The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,

And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,

And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,

To have my love to bed, and to arise;

<sup>1</sup> Scoff.

And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,  
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.  
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies . . .  
Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,  
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,  
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,  
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

BOTTOM: Where's Pease-blossom?

PEASE-BLOSSOM: Ready.

BOTTOM: Scratch my head, Pease-blossom,—where's Mounsieur Cobweb?

COBWEB: Ready.

BOTTOM: Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble bee, on the top of a thistle; and, good mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, mounsieur; and, good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you over-flown with a honey-bag, signior.—Where's Mounsieur Mustard-seed?

MUSTARD-SEED: Ready.

BOTTOM: Give me your neaf,<sup>1</sup> Mounsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

MUSTARD-SEED: What's your will?

BOTTOM: Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, mounsieur; for, methinks, I am marvellous hairy about the face, and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me. I must scratch.

TITANIA: What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

BOTTOM: I have a reasonable good ear in music: let's have the tongs and the bones.

TITANIA: Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

BOTTOM: Truly a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks, I have a great desire to a bottle of hay; good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

<sup>1</sup> Fist.

TITANIA: I have a venturous fairy that shall seek the squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

BOTTOM: I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me: I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

TITANIA: Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.  
Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away. (*Exeunt FAIRIES.*)  
So doth the woodbine<sup>1</sup> the sweet honey-suckle  
Gently entwist; the female ivy so  
Enrings the barked fingers of the elm.  
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! (*They sleep.*)

*Enter PUCK.*

OBERON (*who has been behind, unseen, advancing*): Welcome, good Robin. Seest thou this sweet sight?  
Her dotage now I do begin to pity.  
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,  
Seeking sweet savours for this hateful fool,  
I did upbraid her, and fall out with her;  
• For she his hairy temples then had rounded  
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;  
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds  
Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,  
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes,  
Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.  
When I had at my pleasure taunted her,  
And she in mild terms begged my patience,  
I then did ask of her her changeling child;  
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent  
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.  
And now I have the boy, I will undo  
This hateful imperfection of her eyes:  
And, gentle Puck, take this transforméd scalp  
From off the head of this Athenian swain,  
That he, awaking when the other do,  
May all to Athens back again repair,  
And think no more of this night's accidents,  
But as the fierce vexation of a dream:—

<sup>1</sup> Most editors agree that Shakespeare meant "bindweed" (*convolvulus*).



This palpable gross play hath well beguiled  
The heavy gait of night.—Sweet friends, to bed.—  
A fortnight hold we this solemnity  
In nightly revels and new jollity. (*Exeunt.*)

*Enter* PUCK.

PUCK: Now the hungry lion roars,  
And the wolf behowls the moon;  
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,  
All with weary task fordone.  
Now the wasted brands do glow,  
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,  
Puts the wretch that lies in woe  
In remembrance of a shroud.  
Now it is the time of night  
That the graves, all gaping wide,  
Every one lets forth his sprite,  
In the church-way paths to glide:  
And we fairies, that do run  
By the triple Hecate's team  
From the presence of the sun,  
Following darkness like a dream,  
Now are frolic; not a mouse  
Shall disturb this hallowed house:  
I am sent with broom before,  
To sweep the dust behind the door.

*Enter* OBERON and TITANIA, *with their Train.*

• OBERON: Through the house give glimmering light,  
By the dead and drowsy fire;  
Every elf and fairy sprite  
Hop as light as bird from brier:  
And this ditty, after me,  
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

TITANIA: First, rehearse your song by rote,  
To each word a warbling note:  
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,  
Will we sing, and bless this place. (*Song and dance.*)

*From A Midsummer-Night's Dream.*



## 2. ON PROSPERO'S ISLAND

[*The Tempest*—a play of music and magic—though printed first in the Folio of 1623, is probably Shakespeare's last; and Prospero's farewell to his magic art may be said to synchronise with the author's retirement from London to Stratford towards the end of his life. The play was performed at Court during the winter of 1612-13 in connexion with the festivities preceding the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth (daughter of James I) with the Elector Palatine.

Prospero, Duke of Milan, expelled from his dukedom by his usurping brother Antonio, has with his daughter Miranda found refuge on an enchanted island, where are also Ariel ("an airy spirit") and Caliban ("a savage and deformed slave") whose mother, Sycorax, had been a witch. Ariel and Caliban both serve Prospero. Caliban's service is menial, while Ariel does the business of a spirit. Prospero is possessed of magic books, which give him control over the powers of earth and air. While Antonio, his son Ferdinand, his ally Alonso (King of Naples) and the King's brother Sebastian were on a voyage, Prospero, raising a magic storm, has caused their ship to be wrecked; but so skilfully has he ordered the affair, that the entire company have come safely ashore upon his island.<sup>1</sup> Instead of taking this opportunity for revenge, Prospero seeks to make a love-match between Ferdinand and Miranda and to effect a reconciliation with his enemies. Ariel has now been sent to separate Ferdinand from his companions and lead him to Miranda.]

### (i) *ARIEL INTRODUCES FERDINAND*

*Scene—Before Prospero's cell*

*Present: PROSPERO and MIRANDA. Enter ARIEL, invisible, playing and singing; FERDINAND following him.*

*ARIEL (sings):*

*Come unto these yellow sands,  
And then take hands:  
Court'sied when you have, and kissed,  
The wild waves whist:  
Foot it fealty here and there;  
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear.*

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1609 the *Sea-Venture* (an English ship bound for Virginia) was driven by a storm on the coast of one of the hitherto unknown Bermudas, where the survivors of the wreck lived for some time enjoying the mild climate, but disturbed by wild hogs and mysterious noises (Jourdain, *Discoverie of the Barmudas, otherwise called the Ile of Divels*, 1610, etc).



PROSPERO: No, wench, it eats and sleeps and hath such senses  
As we have, such. This gallant, which thou seest,  
Was in the wreck; and, but he's something stained  
With grief that's beauty's canker, thou might'st call him  
A goodly person. He hath lost his fellows,  
And strays about to find them.

MIRANDA: I might call him  
A thing divine, for nothing natural  
I ever saw so noble.

PROSPERO (*aside*): It goes on, I see,  
As my soul prompts it. Spirit, fine spirit! I'll free thee  
Within two days for this.

## (ii) *AN ELIZABETHAN UTOPIA*<sup>1</sup>

*Scene—Another part of the island*

*Present: ANTONIO (PROSPERO'S brother), SEBASTIAN (brother of  
ALONSO, King of Naples), GONZALO (a counsellor) and others.*

GONZALO: Had I plantation of this isle, my lord,—

ANTONIO: He'd sow't with nettle-seed.

SEBASTIAN: Or docks, or mallows.

GONZALO: And were the king on't, what would I do?

SEBASTIAN: 'Scape being drunk, for want of wine.

GONZALO: I' the commonwealth I would by contraries

Execute all things: for no kind of traffic

Would I admit; no name of magistrate;

Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,

And use of service, none; contract, succession,

Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;

No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil:

No occupation, all men idle, all;

And women too, but innocent and pure;

No sovereignty.

<sup>1</sup> The subject of an ideal commonwealth, as least as old as Plato, was very popular in Shakespeare's time. Gonzalo's utopia is evidently founded on a passage in Montaigne's essays, of which Florio had published a translation in 1603.

SEBASTIAN: Yet he would be king on't.

ANTONIO: The latter end of his commonwealth forgets the beginning.

GONZALO: All things in common nature should produce,  
Without sweat or endeavour: treason, felony,  
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,  
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,  
Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,  
To feed my innocent people.

SEBASTIAN: No marrying 'mong his subjects?

ANTONIO: None, man; all idle; whores and knaves.

GONZALO: I would with such perfection govern, sir,  
To excel the golden age.

SEBASTIAN: God save his Majesty!

ANTONIO: Long live Gonzalo!

(iii) *CALIBAN TASTES SOMETHING NEW*

*Scene—Another part of the island.*

*Present: CALIBAN, STEPHANO (a butler) with a bottle in his hand,  
and TRINCULO (a jester).*

CALIBAN: These be fine things, an if they be not sprites.  
That's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor:  
I will kneel to him. (*He does so.*)

STEPHANO: How didst thou 'scape? How cam'st thou hither? swear  
by this bottle, how thou cam'st hither. I escaped upon a butt of sack,  
which the sailors heaved o'erboard; by this bottle! which I made  
of the bark of a tree, with mine own hands, since I was cast ashore.

CALIBAN (*coming forward*): I'll swear, upon that bottle, to be thy  
true subject, for the liquor is not earthly.

STEPHANO: Here (*offering TRINCULO the bottle*): swear then how  
thou escapedst.

TRINCULO: Swam ashore, man, like a duck. I can swim like a  
duck, I'll be sworn.

STEPHANO: Here, kiss the book. (*TRINCULO drinks.*) Though thou  
canst swim like a duck, thou art made like a goose (*snatching the  
bottle from him*).

TRINCULO: O Stephano,—hast any more of this?

STEPHANO: The whole butt, man; my cellar is in a rock by the sea-side, where my wine is hid. (*Spies CALIBAN.*) How now, moon-calf? how does thine ague?

CALIBAN: Hast thou not dropped from heaven?

STEPHANO: Out o' the moon, I do assure thee. (*Draining the bottle.*) I was the man in the moon, when time was.

CALIBAN (*bowing low*): I have seen thee in her, and I do adore thee: My mistress showed me thee, and thy dog, and thy bush.

STEPHANO: Come, swear to that; kiss the book: I will furnish it anon with new contents: swear.

TRINCULO: By this good light, this is a very shallow monster:—I afraid of him!—a very weak monster.—The man i' the moon!—a most poor monster. (*As CALIBAN sucks at an empty bottle*) Well drawn, monster, in good sooth.

CALIBAN: I'll show thee every fertile inch o' th' island, And I will kiss thy foot. I pr'ythee, be my god.

TRINCULO: By this light, a most perfidious and drunken monster; when 's god's asleep, he'll rob his bottle.

CALIBAN: I'll kiss thy foot: I'll swear myself thy subject.

STEPHANO: Come on, then; down, and swear. (*CALIBAN kneels with his back to TRINCULO.*)

TRINCULO: I shall laugh myself to death at this puppy-headed monster. A most scurvy monster: I could find it in my heart to beat him,—

STEPHANO: Come, kiss. (*CALIBAN kisses his foot.*)

TRINCULO: —but that the poor monster's in drink. An abominable monster!

CALIBAN: I'll show thee the best springs; I'll pluck thee berries; I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough.

A plague upon the tyrant that I serve!

I'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee,  
Thou wondrous man.

TRINCULO: A most ridiculous monster, to make a wonder of a poor drunkard!

CALIBAN: I pr'ythee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;  
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts;  
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how  
To snare the nimble marmoset: I'll bring thee  
To clustering filberts, and sometimes I'll get thee  
Young scamels<sup>1</sup> from the rock. Wilt thou go with me?

STEPHANO: I pr'ythee now, lead the way, without any more talking.  
. . . (*They reel off.*)

(iv) FAIRY MUSIC

*Scene—Same*

*Present: Same. ARIEL, invisible, plays on a tabor and pipe.*

STEPHANO: What is this same?

TRINCULO: This is the tune of our catch, played by the picture of Nobody.

STEPHANO: If thou beest a man, show thyself in thy likeness: if thou beest a devil, take't as thou list.

TRINCULO: O, forgive me my sins!

STEPHANO: He that dies pays all debts: I defy thee. Mercy upon us!

CALIBAN: Art thou afeard?

STEPHANO: No, monster, not I.

- CALIBAN: Be not afeard: the isle is full of noises,  
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.  
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments  
Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices  
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,  
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,  
The clouds methought would open and show riches  
Ready to drop upon me, that, when I waked,  
I cried to dream again.

STEPHANO: This will prove a brave kingdom to me, where I shall have my music for nothing.

CALIBAN: When Prospero is destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> Thus in First Folio, 1623, in which the play was first printed. Evidently a misprint for "scamells" = seamews.

STEPHANO: That shall be by and by: I remember the story.

TRINCULO: The sound is going away; let's follow it, and after do our work.

STEPHANO: Lead, monster; we'll follow. I would I could see this taborer; he lays it on.

TRINCULO: Wilt come? I'll follow, Stephano. (*Exeunt.*)

### (v) A FAIRY BANQUET

*Scene—Same*

*Enter KING ALONSO, SEBASTIAN, ANTONIO, GONZALO, the lord FRANCISCO and others. Solemn music. Enter several strange shapes bringing in a banquet. They dance about it and depart.*

ALONSO: What harmony is this? My good friends, hark!

GONZALO: Marvellous sweet music!

ALONSO: Give us kind keepers, heavens! What were these?

SEBASTIAN: A living drollery. Now I will believe  
That there are unicorns, that in Arabia  
There is one tree, the phoenix' throne, one phoenix  
At this hour reigning there.

ANTONIO: I'll believe both;  
And what does else want credit, come to me,  
And I'll be sworn 'tis true. Travellers ne'er did lie,  
Though fools at home condemn 'em.

GONZALO: If in Naples  
I should report this now, would they believe me?  
If I should say I saw such islanders—  
For, certes, these are people of the island—  
Who, though they are of monstrous shape, yet, note,  
Their manners are more gentle-kind than of  
Our human generation you shall find  
Many, nay, almost any. . . .

•ALONSO: I cannot too much muse  
Such shapes, such gesture and such sound, expressing,  
Although they want the use of tongue, a kind  
Of excellent dumb discourse. . . .

FRANCISCO: They vanished strangely.

SEBASTIAN: No matter, since  
They have left their viands behind; for we have stomachs. (*He surveys the banquet hungrily.*)  
Will't please you taste of what is here?

ALONSO: Not I.

GONZALO: Faith, sir, you need not fear. When we were boys,  
Who would believe that there were mountaineers  
Dew-lapped like bulls, whose throats had hanging at 'em  
Wallets of flesh! or that there were such men  
Whose heads stood in their breasts? which now we find  
Each putter-out of five for one will bring us  
Good warrant of.

ALONSO: I will stand to and feed,  
Although my last: no matter, since I feel  
The best is past. Brother, my lord the duke,  
Stand to and do as we.

*Thunder and lightning. The banquet vanishes.*

### (vi) FAREWELL

[Prospero's magic has done its work and is no longer needed. His plan for reconciliation has been carried to completion. Ferdinand and Miranda have fallen in love with each other. All the old enemies, having been led to repentance, are now new friends; and the play comes to the happiest of happy endings.]

#### *Scene—Before PROSPERO's cell*

✓PROSPERO: Our revels now are ended. These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
Are melted into air, into thin air:  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life



Is rounded with a sleep. . . . (*He traces a magic circle with his staff.*)  
Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,  
And ye that on the sands with printless foot  
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him  
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that  
By moonshine do the green-sour ringlets make  
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you whose pastime  
Is to make midnight mushrooms; that rejoice  
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid  
(Weak masters though ye be) I have bedimmed  
The noontide sun, called forth the mutinous winds,  
And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault  
Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder  
Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak  
With his own bolt: the strong-based promontory  
Have I made shake; and by the spurs plucked up  
The pine and cedar. Graves, at my command,  
Have waked their sleepers, oped and let 'em forth  
By my so potent art. But this rough magic  
I here abjure; and, when I have required  
Some heavenly music—which even now I do—  
(*lifting his staff.*)  
To work mine end upon their senses that  
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,  
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,  
And deeper than did ever plummet sound  
I'll drown my book. (*Solemn music.*)

From *The Tempest*.

V  
SPEECH AND SOLILOQUY

[The reader should bear in mind that Shakespeare's audience would regard verse as the natural expression of emotion, and that soliloquy (however artificial it may seem on our modern stage) would seem natural in an Elizabethan theatre, where actors and audience were much nearer to each other.]

## CLARENCE'S DREAM

Methought that I had broken from the Tower,  
And was embarked to cross to Burgundy;  
And, in my company, my brother Gloucester;  
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk  
Upon the hatches: thence we looked toward England,  
And cited up a thousand fearful times,  
During the wars of York and Lancaster,  
That had befall'n us. As we paced along  
Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,  
Methought that Gloucester stumbled; and, in falling,  
Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard,  
Into the tumbling billows of the main.  
•Lord, Lord! methought, what pain it was to drown!  
What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears!  
What ugly sights of death within mine eyes!  
Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;  
Ten thousand men that fishes gnawed upon;  
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,  
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
All scattered in the bottom of the sea:  
Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those holes  
Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,  
As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,  
Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,  
And mocked the dead bones that lay scattered by. . . .  
O, then began the tempest to my soul,  
Who passed, methought, the melancholy flood,  
With that grim ferryman which poets write of,

Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.  
The first that there did greet my stranger soul,  
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick;  
Who cried aloud, "What scourge for perjury  
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?"  
And so he vanished: then came wandering by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood; and he shrieked out aloud,  
"Clarence is come—false, fleeting, perjured Clarence—  
That stabbed me in the field by Tewksbury:  
Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments!"  
With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends  
Environed me, and howled in mine ears  
Such hideous cries, that, with the very noise,  
I trembling waked, and, for a season after,  
Could not believe but that I was in hell,  
Such terrible impression made my dream.

*From King Richard III.*

## RICHMOND'S PRAYER

*On the Eve of Bosworth Field*

O Thou, whose captain I account myself,  
Look on my forces with a gracious eye;  
Put in their hands thy bruising irons of wrath,  
That they may crush down with a heavy fall  
The usurping helmets of our adversaries!  
Make us thy ministers of chastisement,  
That we may praise thee in the victory!  
To thee I do commend my watchful soul,  
Ere I let fall the windows<sup>1</sup> of mine eyes:  
Sleeping and waking, O, defend me still!

*From King Richard III.*

<sup>1</sup> This was the word used for shutters in Shakespeare's time.

## LOVE

### 1. *Its Signs*

[Valentine is talking with Speed, his servant.]

VALENTINE: Tell me, do you know Madam Silvia?

SPEED: She that your worship loves?

VALENTINE: Why, how know you that I am in love?

SPEED: Marry, by these special marks: first, you have learned—like Sir Proteus—to wreath your arms, like a malcontent; to relish a love-song, like a robin-redbreast; to walk alone, like one that had the pestilence; to sigh, like a school-boy that had lost his ABC; to weep, like a young wench that had buried her grandam; to fast, like one that takes diet; to watch, like one that fears robbing; to speak puling, like a beggar at Hallowmas. You were wont, when you laughed, to crow like a cock; when you walked, to walk like one of the lions; when you fasted, it was presently after dinner; when you looked sadly, it was for want of money: and now you are metamorphosed with a mistress, that, when I look on you, I can hardly think you my master.

*From The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

### 2. *Its Power*

Love, first learned in a lady's eyes,  
Lives not alone immured in the brain;  
But with the motion of all elements,  
Courses as swift as thought in every power,  
And gives to every power a double power,  
Above their functions and their offices.  
It adds a precious seeing to the eye;  
A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;  
A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,  
When the suspicious head of theft is stopped;  
Love's feeling is more soft and sensible  
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails;  
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste.  
For valour, is not Love a Hercules,

Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?  
Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical  
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair;  
And, when Love speaks, the voice of all the gods  
Make heaven drowsy with the harmony.

From *Love's Labour's Lost*.

### 3. *Its Course*

The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns:  
The current that with gentle murmur glides,  
Thou know'st, being stopped, impatiently doth rage;  
But when his fair course is not hinderéd,  
He makes sweet music with th'enamelled stones,  
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;  
And so by many winding nooks he strays,  
With willing sport, to the wide<sup>1</sup> ocean.  
Then let me go, and hinder not my course:  
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,  
And make a pastime of each weary step,  
Till the last step have brought me to my love;  
And there I'll rest, as after much turmóil,  
A blesséd soul doth in Elysium.

From *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

### QUEEN MAB

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes  
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
On the fore-finger of an alderman,  
Drawn with a team of little atomies  
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;  
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,  
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,

<sup>1</sup> So Collier. Globe, following the First Folio, has "wild".

The traces of the smallest spider's web,  
The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,  
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,  
Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,  
Not half so big as a round little worm  
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid;  
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut  
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,  
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.  
And in this state she gallops night by night  
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;  
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,  
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,  
O'er ladies lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,  
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:  
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;  
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail  
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,  
Then dreams he of another benefice:  
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
Of healths five-fathom deep; and then anon  
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,  
And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two  
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab  
That plats the manes of horses in the night,  
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,  
Which once untangled much misfortune bodes:  
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,  
That presses them and learns them first to bear,  
Making them women of good carriage:  
This is she.

*From Romeo and Juliet.*

## HOUNDS AND ECHO

[Duke Theseus and Queen Hippolyta, his betrothed, with their huntsmen are in a wood near Athens. It is early morning.]

THESEUS: Go, one of you, find out the forester;  
For now our observation is performed;  
And since we have the vaward of the day,  
My love shall hear the music of my hounds:  
Uncouple in the western valley; go—  
Dispatch, I say, and find the forester. (*Exit an attendant.*)  
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,  
And mark the musical confusion  
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

HIPPOLYTA: I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,  
When in a wood of Crete they bayed the bear  
With hounds of Sparta. •Never did I hear  
Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,  
The skies, the fountains, every region near  
Seemed all one mutual cry. I never heard  
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

THESEUS: My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
So flewed,<sup>1</sup> so sanded;<sup>1</sup> and their heads are hung  
With ears that swept away the morning dew;  
Crook-kneed, and dew-lapt like Thessalian bulls;  
Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tuneable  
Was never holla'd to, nor cheered with horn,  
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly.  
Judge when you hear.

*From A Midsummer-Night's Dream.*

## IMAGINATION

The lunatic, the lover and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact:  
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,  
That is, the madman: the lover, all as frantic,

<sup>1</sup> With large hanging chaps; sand-coloured.



Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:  
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.

From *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.

### A MOTHER'S GRIEF

CARDINAL PANDULPH: You hold too heinous a respect of grief.

CONSTANCE: He talks to me that never had a son.

KING PHILIP: You are as fond of grief as of your child.

CONSTANCE: Grief fills the room up of my absent child:

Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,

Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,

Remembers me of all his gracious parts,

Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;

Then have I reason to be fond of grief!

Fare you well: had you such a loss as I,

I could give better comfort than you do.

I will not keep this form upon my head,

When there is such disorder in my wit. (*She tears down her hair.*)

O Lord! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son!

My life, my joy, my food, my all the world!

My widow-comfort, and my sorrows' cure!

From *King John*.

### A FRENCH INVASION, 1216

[Philip Faulconbridge, bastard son of King Richard I, is speaking.]

But wherefore do you droop? why look you sad?

Be great in act, as you have been in thought;

Let not the world see fear and sad distrust

Govern the motion of a kingly eye:

Be stirring as the time, be fire with fire,  
Threaten the threatener, and outface the brow  
Of bragging horror: so shall inferior eyes,  
That borrow their behaviours from the great,  
Grow great by your example and put on  
The dauntless spirit of resolution.  
Away, and glister like the god of war,  
When he intendeth to become<sup>1</sup> the field:  
Show boldness and aspiring confidence . . .  
This England never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,  
But when it first did help to wound itself . . .  
Come the three corners of the world in arms,  
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,  
If England to itself do rest but true.

*From King John.*

### GAUNT'S PHILOSOPHY

- JOHN OF GAUNT: All places that the eye of heaven visits  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.  
Teach thy necessity to reason thus:  
There is no virtue like necessity. . . .  
Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
To lie that way thou goest, not whence thou com'st:  
Suppose the singing-birds musicians,  
The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence<sup>2</sup> strewed,  
The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more  
Than a delightful measure or a dance;  
For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite  
The man that mocks at it and sets it light.
- HENRY BOLINGBROKE: O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
By bare imagination of a feast?  
Or wallow naked in December snow

<sup>1</sup> Get to.

<sup>2</sup> Presence-chamber.

By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?  
O, no! the apprehension of the good  
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:  
Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more  
Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.

From *King Richard II.*

## GAUNT SPEAKS FOR ENGLAND

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT sick, with the DUKE OF YORK, etc.*

GAUNT: Will the king come, that I may breathe my last  
In wholesome counsel to his unstaïd youth?

YORK: Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath;  
For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.

• GAUNT: O, but they say the tongues of dying men  
Enforce attention like deep harmony:  
Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,  
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.  
He that no more must say is listened more  
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose;  
More are men's ends marked than their lives before:  
The setting sun, and music at the close,  
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,  
Writ in remembrance more than things long past:  
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,  
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear. . . .  
Methinks I am a prophet new inspired  
And thus expiring do foretell of him:  
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,  
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;  
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short ;  
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;  
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:  
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,  
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.  
This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,

This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
 This fortress built by Nature for herself  
 Against infection and the hand of war,  
 This happy breed of men, this little world,  
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
 Which serves it in the office of a wall  
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
 Against the envy of less happier lands,  
 This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
 This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
 Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,  
 Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
 For Christian service and true chivalry,  
 As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry  
 Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,  
 This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
 Dear for her reputation through the world,  
 Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,  
 Like to a tenement or pelting farm:  
 •England, bound in with the triumphant sea,  
 Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
 Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,  
 With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds:  
 That England, that was wont to conquer others,  
 Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.  
 Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,  
 How happy then were my ensuing death!

*From King Richard II.*

### • UN ROI SOLEIL

[King Richard II is rebuking his cousin, Aumerle, who has warned him that the power of his adversary, Bolingbroke, is increasing. This passage is of special interest as an example of Shakespeare's use of the sun-image, which seems to dominate the play.]

Discomfortable cousin! know'st thou not  
 That when the searching eye of heaven is hid  
 Behind the globe, that lights the lower world,

Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen,  
In murders and in outrage, boldly here;  
But when, from under his terrestrial ball,  
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines,  
And darts his light through every guilty hole,  
Then murders, treasons, and detested sins,  
The cloak of night being pluckt from off their backs,  
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?  
So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke—  
Who all this while hath revelled in the night,  
Whilst we were wandering with the Antipodes—  
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east,  
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,  
Not able to endure the sight of day,  
But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.  
Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm from an anointed king;  
The breath of worldly men cannot depose  
The deputy elected by the Lord:  
For every man that Bolingbroke hath prest  
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,  
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay  
A glorious angel: then, if angels fight,  
Weak men must fall; for heaven still guards the right.

*From King Richard II.*

## COURAGE

Wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,  
But presently prevent the ways to wail.  
To fear the foe, since fear oppresses strength,  
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,  
And so your follies fight against yourself:  
Fear and be slain, no worse can come to fight,  
And fight and die in death destroying death,  
Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

*From King Richard II.*

## COMPLAINT OF KINGS

### I. RICHARD II

Of comfort no man speak;  
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs;  
Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes  
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.  
Let's choose executors, and talk of wills:  
And yet not so,—for what can we bequeath,  
Save our deposéd bodies to the ground?  
Our lands, our lives, and all are Bolingbroke's,  
And nothing can we call our own but death,  
And that small model of the barren earth  
Which serves as paste<sup>1</sup> and cover to our bones.  
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground,  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings:—  
How some have been deposed; some slain in war;  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;  
Some poisoned by their wives; some sleeping killed;  
All murdered:—for within the hollow crown  
That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
Keeps Death his court; and there the antick sits,  
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp;  
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,  
To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks;  
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,—  
As if this flesh, which walls about our life,  
Were brass impregnable; and humoured thus,  
Comes at the last, and with a little pin  
Bores through his castle-wall, and—farewell king!  
Cover your heads, and mock not flesh and blood  
With solemn reverence; throw away respect,  
Tradition, form, and ceremonious duty;  
For you have but mistook me all this while:  
I live with bread like you, feel want,  
Taste grief, need friends:—subjected thus,  
How can you say to me, I am a king?      *From King Richard II.*

<sup>1</sup> "A metaphor, not of the most sublime kind, taken from a pie" (Johnson).

## ✓2. *HENRY IV*

How many thousand of my poorest subjects  
Are at this hour asleep!—O sleep, O gentle sleep,  
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,  
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,  
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?  
Why, rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,  
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,  
And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,  
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,  
Under the canopies of costly state,  
And lulled with sound of sweetest melody?  
O thou dull god, why li'st thou with the vile  
In loathsome beds, and leav'st the kingly couch  
A watch-case or a common 'larum-bell?  
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast  
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains  
In cradle of the rude imperious surge,  
And in the visitation of the winds,  
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,  
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them  
With deafening clamour in the slippery clouds,  
That, with the hurly, death itself awakes?  
Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose  
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude;  
And in the calmest and most stillest night,  
With all appliances and means to boot,  
Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down!  
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

*From King Henry IV, Part II.*

## • 3. *HENRY V*

What infinite heart's-ease  
Must kings neglect, that private men enjoy!  
And what have kings, that privates have not too,  
Save ceremony, save general ceremony?

And what art thou, thou idol ceremony? . . .  
 Canst thou, when thou command'st the beggar's knee,  
 Command the health of it? No, thou proud dream,  
 That play'st so subtly with a king's repose,  
 I am a king that find thee, and I know  
 'Tis not the balm, the sceptre and the ball,  
 The sword, the mace, the crown imperial,  
 The intertissued robe of gold and pearl,  
 The farcéd title running 'fore the king,  
 The throne he sits on; nor the tide of pomp  
 That beats upon the high shore of this world:  
 No, not all these, thrice-gorgeous ceremony,  
 Not all these, laid in bed majestical,  
 Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave,  
 Who with a body filled and vacant mind  
 Gets him to rest, crammed with distressful bread;  
 Never sees horrid night, the child of hell,  
 But, like a lackey, from the rise to set  
 Sweats in the eye of Phoebus and all night  
 Sleeps in Elysium: next day after dawn,  
 Doth rise, and help Hyperion to his horse,  
 And follows so the ever-running year  
 With profitable labour to his grave.  
 And, but for ceremony, such a wretch,  
 Winding up days with toil and nights with sleep,  
 Had the fore-hand and vantage of a king.

From *King Henry V.*

#### 4. *HENRY VI*

O God! methinks it were a happy life,  
 To be no better than a homely swain;  
 To sit upon a hill, as I do now,  
 To carve<sup>1</sup> out dials quaintly,<sup>2</sup> point by point,  
 Thereby to see the minutes how they run,  
 How many make the hour full complete;  
 How many hours bring about the day;  
 How many days will finish up the year;

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps a reference to shepherds who cut sundials in the grass on a hillside.

<sup>2</sup> Cleverly.



How many years a mortal man may live.  
When this is known, then to divide the times:  
So many hours must I tend my flock;  
So many hours must I take my rest;  
So many hours must I contemplate;  
So many hours must I sport myself;  
So many days my ewes have been with young;  
So many weeks ere the poor fools with ean;  
So many years ere I shall shear the fleece:  
So minutes, hours, days, months, and years,  
Passed over to the end they were created,  
Would bring white hairs unto a quiet grave.  
Ah, what a life were this! how sweet! how lovely!  
Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade  
To shepherds looking on their silly<sup>1</sup> sheep,  
Than doth a rich-embroidered canopy  
To kings that fear their subjects' treachery?  
O yes, it doth; a thousand-fold it doth.

From *King Henry VI, Part III.*

## THE LADY OF BELMONT

In Belmont is a lady richly left,  
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,  
Of wondrous virtues.  
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia;  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,  
For the four winds blow in from every coast  
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks  
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,  
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,  
And many Jasons come in quest of her.

From *The Merchant of Venice.*

<sup>1</sup> Innocent.

## LAUNCELOT GOBBO DECIDES TO RUN

LAUNCELOT: Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me—"Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot", or "good Gobbo" or "good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away". My conscience says,—“No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo”; or, as aforesaid, “honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels”. Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: “Via!” says the fiend; “away”! says the fiend; “for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind”, says the fiend, “and run”. Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me—“My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man’s son”, or rather an honest woman’s son; for, indeed, my father did something smack—something grow to—he had a kind of taste:—well, my conscience says, “Launcelot, budge not”. “Budge”, says the fiend: “Budge not”, says my conscience. “Conscience”, says I, “you counsel well”; “fiend”, say I, “you counsel well”: to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who (God bless the mark) is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnal, and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

From *The Merchant of Venice*.

## •THE JEW

SHYLOCK: I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die?

From *The Merchant of Venice*.

## UNPROFITABLE CHAT

*Scene—Wales*

*Present: OWEN GLENDOWER, leader of Welsh rebels, HOTSPUR, son of the Earl of Northumberland, and MORTIMER, Earl of March.*

**GLENDOWER:** At my nativity  
 The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,  
 Of burning cressets; and at my birth  
 The frame and huge foundation of the earth  
 Shaked like a coward.

**HOTSPUR:** Why, so it would have done at the same season, if your mother's cat had but kittened, though yourself had never been born.

GLENDOWER: I say the earth did shake when I was born . . .  
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes;  
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds  
Were strangely clamorous to the frightened fields.  
These signs have marked me extraordinary;  
And all the courses of my life do show  
I am not in the roll of common men.  
Where is he living, clipt in with the sea  
That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales,  
Which calls me pupil, or hath read to me?  
And bring him out that is but woman's son  
Can trace<sup>1</sup> me in the tedious ways of art,  
And hold me pace in deep experiments.

HOTSPUR: I think there's no man speaks better Welsh.—I'll to dinner.

**MORTIMER:** Peace, cousin Percy; you will make him mad.

**GLENDOWER:** I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

**HOTSPUR:** Why, so can I, or so can any man;  
But will they come when you do call for them?

**GLENDOWER:** Why, I can teach you, cousin, to command  
The devil.

**1 Follow.**

HOTSPUR: And I can teach thee, coz, to shame the devil  
By telling truth: tell truth, and shame the devil.—  
If thou have power to raise him, bring him hither,  
And I'll be sworn I have power to shame him hence.  
O, while you live, tell truth, and shame the devil!  
MORTIMER: Come, come, no more of this unprofitable chat.

*From King Henry IV, Part I.*

### • RUMOUR SPEAKS

Which of you will stop  
The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?  
I, from the orient to the drooping west,  
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold  
The acts commencéd on this ball of earth:  
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,  
The which in every language I pronounce,  
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.  
I speak of peace, while covert enmity  
Under the smile of safety wounds the world:  
And who but Rumour, who but only I,  
Make fearful musters and prepared defence,  
Whilst the big year, swoln with some other grief,  
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,  
And no such matter? Rumour is a pipe  
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures:  
And of so easy and so plain a stop,  
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,  
The still-discordant wavering multitude,  
Can play upon it.

*From King Henry IV, Part II.*

### AFTER AGINCOURT

[The DUKE OF BURGUNDY is addressing the two Kings.]

My duty to you both, on equal love,  
Great Kings of France and England! That I have laboured,  
With all my wits, my pains, and strong endeavours,

To bring your most imperial majesties  
 Unto this bar and royal interview,  
 Your mightiness on both parts best can witness.  
 Since then my office hath so far prevailed,  
 That, face to face, and royal eye to eye,  
 You have congregated, let it not disgrace me,  
 If I demand, before this royal view,  
 What rub or what impediment there is,  
 Why that the naked, poor, and mangled Peace,  
 Dear nurse of arts, plenties, and joyful births,  
 Should not in this best garden of the world,  
 Our fertile France, put up her lovely visage?  
 Alas, she hath from France too long been chased!  
 And all her husbandry doth lie on heaps,  
 Corrupting in its own fertility.  
 Her vine, the merry cheerer of the heart,  
 Unpruned dies; her hedges even-pleached,  
 Like prisoners wildy overgrown with hair,  
 Put forth disordered twigs; her fallow leas  
 The darnel, hemlock, and rank fumitory  
 Doth root upon; while that the coulter rusts,  
 That should deracinate such savagery;  
 The even mead, that erst brought sweetly forth  
 The freckled cowslip, burnet, and green clover,  
 Wanting the scythe, all incorrected, rank,  
 Conceive by idleness, and nothing teems  
 But hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies,<sup>1</sup> burs,  
 Losing both beauty and utility.  
 And as our vineyards, fallows, meads, and hedges,  
 Defective in their natures, grow to wildness,  
 Even so our houses, and ourselves and children,  
 Have lost, or do not learn, for want of time,  
 The sciences that should become our country;  
 But grow like savages—as soldiers will,  
 That nothing do but meditate on blood—  
 To swearing and stern looks, diffused attire,  
 And every thing that seems unnatural.

From *King Henry V.*

<sup>1</sup> Kexes—hollow plant stems (*O.E.D.*).

## A ROYAL COURTSHIP

[King Henry V is proposing marriage to Princess Katherine of France.]

### 1. *St. Denis and St. George*

KING HENRY: If ever thou beest mine, Kate—as I have a saving faith within me tells me thou shalt— . . . shall not thou and I, between Saint Denis and Saint George, compound a boy, half French half English, that shall go to Constantinople and take the Turk by the beard? shall we not?

### • 2. *The Right Sort*

KING HENRY: While thou livest, dear Kate, take a fellow of plain and uncoined constancy. . . . A good leg will fall; a straight back will stoop; a black beard will turn white; a curled pate will grow bald; a fair face will wither; a full eye will wax hollow; but a good heart, Kate, is the sun and the moon; or rather the sun and not the moon; for it shines bright and never changes, but keeps his course truly.

From *King Henry V*.

## ORDER AND DEGREE

[The speeches given to the Duke of Exeter and the Archbishop of Canterbury in *King Henry V* and to Ulysses in the later play of *Troilus and Cressida* show that Shakespeare was greatly interested in the question of order and degree. The idea of unity in the State lay at the root of English political thought in Elizabethan times, and there was a general dread of civil war until the succession to the throne was firmly established. Shakespeare shows the evils of civil war in the three plays dealt with in the first section of this book.]

### 1. *In the Palace of Henry V*

DUKE OF EXETER: Government, though high, and low, and lower,  
Put into parts, doth keep in one consent,  
Congreeing in a full and natural close,  
Like music.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: Therefore doth heaven divide  
The state of man in divers functions,  
Setting endeavour in continual motion;  
To which is fixéd, as an aim or butt,  
Obedience: for so work the honey-bees,  
Creatures that by a rule in nature teach  
The art of order to a peopled kingdom.  
They have a king, and officers of sorts:<sup>1</sup>  
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home;  
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad;  
Others, like soldiers, arméd in their stings,  
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds;  
Which pillage they with merry march bring home  
To the tent-royal of their emperor:  
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys  
The singing masons building roofs of gold,  
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;  
The poor mechanic porters crowding in  
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate;  
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,  
Delivering o'er to éxecutors pale  
The lazy yawning drone. I this infer,  
That many things, having full reference  
To one consent, may work contrariously,  
As many arrows, looséd several ways,  
Come to one mark:  
As many several<sup>2</sup> ways meet in one town;  
As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea;  
As many lines close in the dial's centre;  
So may a thousand actions, once afoot,  
End in one purpose, and be all well borne  
Without defeat.

From *King Henry V.*

<sup>1</sup> I.e. of various ranks.

<sup>2</sup> Globe, following Capell (1768), omits this word, which appears in the Quarto of 1600, but not in the First Folio.

•2. *Before Agamemnon's Tent*

AGAMEMNON: Speak, Prince of Ithaca . . .

ULYSSES: When that the general is not like the hive,  
To whom the foragers shall all repair,  
What honey is expected? Degree being vizarded,  
Th' unworthiest shows as fairly in the mask.  
The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre  
Observe degree, priority, and place,  
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,  
Office and custom, in all line of order:  
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol  
In noble eminence enthroned and sphered  
Amidst the other; whose medicinable eye  
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,  
And posts, like the commandment of a king,  
Sans check, to good and bad: but when the planets,  
In evil mixture, to disorder wander,  
What plagues, and what portents, what mutiny,  
What raging of the sea, shaking of earth,  
Commotion in the winds, frights, changes, horrors,  
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate  
The unity and married calm of states  
Quite from their fixture! O, when degree is shaken,  
Which is the ladder to all high designs,  
The enterprise is sick! How could communities,  
Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,  
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,  
The primogenitive and due of birth,  
Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,  
But by degree, stand in authentic place?  
Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And, hark, what discord follows! each thing meets  
In mere oppugnacy: the bounded waters  
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,  
And make a sop of all this solid globe:  
Strength should be lord of imbecility,  
And the rude son should strike his father dead:  
Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong—



Between whose endless jar justice resides—  
Should lose their names, and so should justice too.  
Then every thing includes itself in power,  
Power into will, will into appetite;  
And appetite, an universal wolf,  
So doubly seconded with will and power,  
Must make perforce an universal prey,  
And last eat up himself.

*From Troilus and Cressida.*

### ·BREAK OF DAY

Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:  
The wolves have preyed; and look, the gentle day,  
Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about  
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.

*From Much Ado about Nothing.*

### ·HOLLOW MEN

When love begins to sicken and decay,  
It useth an enforced ceremony.  
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith:  
But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,  
Make gallant show and promise of their mettle;  
But when they should endure the bloody spur,  
They fall their crests, and, like deceitful jades,  
Sink in the trial.

*From Julius Caesar.*

### ·ARCADIA

[The banished Duke talks in the forest of Arden.]

Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,  
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet  
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods

More free from peril than the envious court?  
 Here feel we not<sup>1</sup> the penalty of Adam,  
 The season's difference?—as the icy fang  
 And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,  
 Which, when it bites and blows upon my body,  
 Even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say  
 "This is no flattery; these are counsellors  
 That feelingly persuade me what I am."  
 Sweet are the uses of adversity;  
 Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
 Wears yet a precious jewel<sup>2</sup> in his head;  
 And this our life, exempt from public haunt,  
 Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
 Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.  
 I would not change it.

From *As You Like It*.

### THE SEVEN AGES

All the world's a stage,  
 And all the men and women merely players:  
 They have their exits and their entrances;  
 And one man in his time plays many parts,  
 His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
 Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.  
 And then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel  
 And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
 Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,  
 Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
 Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,  
 Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,  
 Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
 Seeking the bubble reputation

<sup>1</sup> Following First Folio. (Globe and most modern editions have *but*, a change which has obscured the Duke's argument).

<sup>2</sup> The Toadstone, said to be "a most sovereign medicine" (*Secrete Wonders of Nature*, 1569).

Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,  
In fair round belly with good capon lined,  
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws and modern instances;<sup>1</sup>  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;  
His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide  
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.

*From As You Like It.*

## · MUSIC AND LOVE

If music be the food of love, play on;  
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,  
The appetite may sicken, and so die.—  
That strain again!—it had a dying fall:  
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound<sup>2</sup>  
That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
Stealing and giving odour!—Enough; no more;  
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.  
O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou!  
That, notwithstanding thy capacity  
Receiveth as the sea, naught enters there,  
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,  
But falls into abatement and low price,  
Even in a minute! so full of shapes is fancy,  
That it alone is high-fantastical.

*From Twelfth Night.*

<sup>1</sup> Commonplace illustrations.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bacon—"The breath of flowers . . . comes and goes like the warbling of music" (*Of Gardens*).

## • A BLANK

VIOLA: My father had a daughter loved a man,  
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,  
I should your lordship.

DUKE OF ILLYRIA: And what's her history?

VIOLA: A blank, my lord. She never told her love,  
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek: she pined in thought;  
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,  
She sat like Patience on a monument,  
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?  
We men may say more, swear more: but, indeed,  
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove  
Much in our vows, but little in our love.

DUKE OF ILLYRIA: But died thy sister of her love, my boy?

VIOLA: I am all the daughters of my father's house,  
And all the brothers too;—and yet I know not.

*From Twelfth Night.*

## •ADVICE TO ACTORS

[Hamlet is addressing the Players.]

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently, for in the very torrent, tempest, and as I may say whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special

observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play—and heard others praise, and that highly—not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it.

*From Hamlet.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF KINGSHIP

The single and peculiar life is bound,  
With all the strength and armour of the mind,  
To keep itself from noyance; but much more  
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest  
The lives of many. The cease of majesty  
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw  
What's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,  
Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,  
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things  
Are mortised and adjoined; which, when it falls,  
Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone  
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

*From Hamlet.*

## •TIME'S WALLET

ACHILLES:                    They passed by me  
As misers do by beggars,—neither gave to me  
Good word nor look: what, are my deeds forgot?  
ULYSSES: Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,  
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,  
A great-sized monster of ingratitude:  
Those scraps are good deeds past; which are devoured  
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon  
As done: perseverance, dear my lord,  
Keeps honour bright: to have done, is to hang  
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail  
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;<sup>1</sup>  
For honour travels in a strait so narrow,  
Where one but goes abreast: keep, then, the path;  
For emulation hath a thousand sons,  
That one by one pursue: if you give way,  
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,  
Like to an entered tide, they all rush by,  
And leave you hindmost;  
Or, like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,  
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,  
O'er-run and trampled on: then what they do in present,  
Though less than yours in past, must o'ertop yours;  
For time is like a fashionable host,  
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand,  
And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,  
Grasps—in the comer: welcome ever smiles,  
And farewell goes out sighing. O, let not virtue seek  
Remuneration for the thing it was;  
For beauty, wit,  
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,  
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all  
To envious and calumniating time.  
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,—  
That all, with one consent, praise new-born gawds,  
Though they are made and moulded of things past,

<sup>1</sup> *Take the instant way* = march straight on without pause.

And give to dust, that is a little guilt,  
More laud than guilt o'er-dusted.  
The present eye praises the present object.

From *Troilus and Cressida*.

## • HELENA'S LOVE FOR BERTRAM

I am undone: there is no living, none,  
If Bertram be away. 'Twere all one  
That I should love a bright particular star  
And think to wed it, he is so above me:  
In his bright radiance and collateral light  
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.  
The ambition in my love thus plagues itself:  
The hind that would be mated by the lion  
Must die for love. 'Twas pretty, though a plague,  
To see him every hour, to sit and draw  
His archéd brows, his hawking eye, his curls,  
In our heart's table,—heart too capable  
Of every line and trick of his sweet favour:  
But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy  
Must sanctify his relics . . . I follow him not  
By any token of presumptuous suit;  
Nor would I have him till I do deserve him;  
Yet never know how that desert should be.  
• I know I love in vain, strive against hope;  
Yet, in this captious and inteemable<sup>1</sup> sieve,  
I still pour in the waters of my love,  
And lack not to lose still . . .  
Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to heaven: the fated sky  
Gives us free scope; only doth backward pull  
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.  
What power is it which mounts my love so high?  
That makes me see, and cannot feed mine eye?

From *All's Well that Ends Well*.

<sup>1</sup> Following *N.S.* (Globe has "intenable," following Second Folio). "Inteemable" = incapable of being emptied.

## THE SUPERNATURAL

They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern<sup>1</sup> and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

*From All's Well that Ends Well.*

### • A MINGLED YARN

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not: and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.

*From All's Well that Ends Well.*

### QUID RETRIBUAMUS?

Thyself and thy belongings  
Are not thine own so proper, as to waste  
Thyself upon thy virtues, they on thee.  
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,  
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues  
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched  
But to fine issues; nor Nature never lends  
The smallest scruple of her excellence  
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines  
Herself the glory of a creditor,  
Both thanks and use.

*From Measure for Measure.*

<sup>1</sup> Commonplace.



## • MEN'S THUNDER

Could great men thunder  
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,  
For every pelting, petty officer  
Would use his heaven for thunder—nothing but thunder!  
Merciful Heaven,  
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt  
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak  
Than the soft myrtle: but man, proud man,  
Dressed in a little brief authority,  
Most ignorant of what he's most assured—  
His glassy essence—like an angry ape,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,  
Would all themselves laugh mortal.

*From Measure for Measure.*

## • LIFE AND DEATH

Reason thus with life—  
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing  
That none but fools would keep: a breath thou art,  
Servile to all the skyey influences  
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,  
Hourly afflict: merely thou art death's fool;  
For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,  
And yet runn'st toward him still. Thou art not noble;  
For all th'accommodations that thou bear'st  
Are nursed by baseness. Thou'rt by no means valiant;  
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork  
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,  
And that thou oft provokest; yet grossly fear'st  
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;  
For thou exists<sup>1</sup> on many a thousand grains

<sup>1</sup> So N.S. (*Globe* has "exist'st").



And blown with restless violence round about  
The pendant world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and incertain thought  
Imagine howling: 'tis too horrible!  
The weariest and most loathéd worldly life  
That age, ache, penury and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.

From *Measure for Measure*.

### SOME FELLOW

This is some fellow,  
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect  
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb  
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he—  
An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth!  
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.  
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness  
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends  
Than twenty silly-ducking observants  
That stretched their duties nicely.

From *King Lear*.

### ON THE CLIFFS OF DOVER

Hark, do you hear the sea? . . . Stand still.—How fearful  
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!  
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air  
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down  
Hangs one that gathers samphire<sup>1</sup>—dreadful trade!  
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:

<sup>1</sup> Cliff plant used in pickles. Gerard says: "Rocke Sampier groweth on the rocky cliffs at Dover" (*Herball*, 1597).

The fishermen that walk upon the beach,  
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,  
Diminished to her cock,—her cock, a buoy  
Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge,  
That on the unnumbered idle pebbles chafes,  
Cannot be heard so high.—I'll look no more;  
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight  
Topple down headlong

From *King Lear*.

### •PATIENCE AND SORROW

[The bearer of bad news is describing how Cordelia received it.]

It seemed she was a queen  
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,  
Sought to be king. . . . Patience and sorrow strove  
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen  
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears  
Were like a better way. Those happy smilets,  
That played on her ripe lip, seemed not to know  
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence  
As pearls from diamonds dropped. In brief,  
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,  
If all could so become it.

From *King Lear*.

### •PROFIT BY LOSS

We, ignorant of ourselves,  
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers  
Deny us for our good; so find we profit  
By losing of our prayers.

From *Antony and Cleopatra*.

## THE PESSIMIST

I am sick of this false world; and will love naught  
But even the mere necessities upon't.  
Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave;  
Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat  
Thy grave-stone daily: make thine epitaph,  
That death in me at others' lives may laugh.

*(Looking on some gold)*

O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce  
'Twixt natural son and sire! thou bright defiler  
Of Hymen's purest bed! thou valiant Mars!  
Thou ever young, fresh, loved, and delicate wooer,  
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow  
That lies on Dian's lap! thou visible god,  
That solder'st close impossibilities,  
And mak'st them kiss! that speak'st with every tongue,  
To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts!  
Think, thy slave man rebels; and by thy virtue  
Set them into confounding odds, that beasts  
May have the world in empire!

*From Timon of Athens.*

## • BIG AND LITTLE FISHES

FIRST FISHERMAN: I marvel how the fishes live in the sea.

SECOND FISHERMAN: Why, as men do a-land,—the great ones eat up the little ones: I can compare our rich misers to nothing so fitly as to a whale; 'a plays and tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at last devours them all at a mouthful: such whales have I heard on o' the land, who never leave gaping till they've swallowed the whole parish, church, steeple, bells, and all.

*From Pericles.*

## A LADY'S BEDCHAMBER

It was hanged  
With tapestry of silk and silver; the story  
Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,  
And Cydnus swelled above the banks, or for  
The press of boats or pride: a piece of work  
So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive  
In workmanship and value; which I wondered  
Could be so rarely and exactly wrought,  
Since the true life on't was. . . . The chimney  
Is south the chamber; and the chimney-piece  
Chaste Dian bathing: never saw I figures  
So likely to report themselves: the cutter  
Was as another nature, dumb; outwent her,  
Motion and breath left out. . . . The roof o' the chamber  
With golden cherubins is fretted: Her andirons—  
I had forgot them—were two winking Cupids  
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely  
Depending on their brands.

From *Cymbeline*.

## •CARDINAL WOLSEY'S FAREWELL

Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness!  
This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
And—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
His greatness is a-ripening—nips his root,  
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventured,  
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,  
This many summers in a sea of glory;  
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride  
At length broke under me; and now has left me,  
Weary and old with service, to the mercy

Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.  
 Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye:  
 I feel my heart new opened. O, how wretched  
 Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!  
 There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,  
 That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,  
 More pangs and fears than wars or women have;  
 And when he falls, he falls, like Lucifer,  
 Never to hope again. . . .  
 Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear  
 In all my miseries; but thou hast forced me,  
 Out of thy honest truth, to play the woman.  
 Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell;  
 And—when I am forgotten, as I shall be,  
 And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention  
 Of me more must be heard of—say, I taught thee,  
 Say, Wolsey—that once trod the ways of glory,  
 And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour—  
 Found thee a way, out of his wreck, to rise in;  
 A sure and safe one, though thy master missed it.  
 Mark but my fall, and that that ruined me.  
 Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition:  
 By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,  
 The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?  
 Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee;  
 Corruption wins not more than honesty.  
 Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,  
 To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not:  
 Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
 Thy God's, and truth's: then if thou fall'st, O Cromwell,  
 Thou fall'st a blessed martyr! Serve the king.

From *King Henry VIII.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This play was first printed in the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's works (1623), but the question of its authorship does not seem to have attracted serious attention till James Spedding dealt with the subject in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (August, 1850). His view—that the play is the work of several dramatists, chiefly Shakespeare and Fletcher—has been accepted by Sir E. K. Chambers (*William Shakespeare*, 1930) and generally adopted by modern scholarship.

# VI

## SONGS AND SONNETS

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## SONGS

### SPRING AND WINTER

When daisies pied, and violets blue,  
And lady-smocks all silver-white,  
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue  
Do paint the meadows with delight,  
The cuckoo then, on every tree,  
Mocks married men; for thus sings he:  
Cuckoo!  
Cuckoo, cuckoo!—O word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear!

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,  
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,  
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,  
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,  
The cuckoo then, on every tree,  
Mocks married men; for thus sings he:  
Cuckoo!  
Cuckoo, cuckoo! O word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear!

•When icicles hang by the wall,  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
And Tom bears logs into the hall  
And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
When blood is nipt and ways be foul,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl:  
Tu-whit!  
Tu-who!—a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel<sup>1</sup> the pot.

<sup>1</sup> Skim.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl:  
    Tu-whit!  
Tu-who!—a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

*From Love's Labour's Lost.*

## THE BLOSSOM

On a day—alack the day!—  
Love, whose month is every May,  
Spied a blossom passing fair  
Playing in the wanton air:  
Through the velvet leaves the wind,  
All unseen, can passage find,  
That the lover, sick to death,  
Wish himself the heaven's breath.  
"Air," quoth he, "thy cheeks may blow;  
Air, would I might triumph so!  
But, alack, my hand is sworn  
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn;—  
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet,  
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet!  
Do not call it sin in me,  
That I am forsworn for thee;  
Thou for whom e'en Jove would swear  
Juno but an Ethiop were;  
And deny himself for Jove,  
Turning mortal for thy love."

*From Love's Labour's Lost.*

## ·SILVIA

Who is Silvia? what is she,  
That all our swains commend her?  
Holy, fair, and wise is she;  
The heaven such grace did lend her,  
That she might admiréd be.

Is she kind as she is fair?  
For beauty lives with kindness:  
Love doth to her eyes repair,  
To help him of his blindness;  
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing  
That Silvia is excelling:  
She excels each mortal thing  
Upon the dull earth dwelling.  
To her let us garlands bring.

From *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

## FANCY

[This song, ringing the knell of trust in delight of the eyes only, is sung as a hint to aid Bassanio's choice of the leaden casket.—*Merchant of Venice*, III, 2.]

SERVITOR: Tell me where is Fancy bred,  
Or in the heart or in the head?  
How begot, how nourished?

ALL: Reply, reply.

SERVITOR: It is engendered in the eyes,  
With gazing fed, and Fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.  
Let us all ring Fancy's knell:  
I'll begin it—Ding, dong, bell!

ALL: Ding, dong, bell!

From *The Merchant of Venice*.

## ✓IN THE FOREST

Under the greenwood tree  
Who loves to lie with me  
And turn his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird's throat,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun  
And loves to live i' the sun,  
Seeking the food he eats  
And pleased with what he gets,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude:  
Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot:  
Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friend remembered not.  
Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho unto the green holly!  
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:  
Then heigh-ho, the holly!  
This life is most jolly.

*From As You Like It.*

## SPRING SONG

[The following song is sung in *As You Like It* by two of the banished Duke's pages. This play was not printed until 1623; but the song is included in Thomas Morley's *First Booke of Ayres* (1600), and we know that Morley had collected his songs before the play was first acted. His version is superior to that printed in *As You Like It*, and is probably the original version. Morley was not a song-writer; and if Shakespeare be not the author, both he and Morley may have borrowed from the same source. The only copy of Morley's book known to exist is in the Folger Library at Washington, D.C.; but its contents have been published in England by Dr. E. H. Fellowes (*English School of Lutenists and Song-writers*), and by his kind permission Morley's version of the song is printed here.]

It was a lover and his lass,  
With a hey, with a ho, and a hey nonino,  
That o'er the green cornfields did pass,  
In spring time,  
The only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing,  
Hey ding a ding, ding.  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,  
With a hey, with a ho, and a hey nonino,  
These pretty country fools would lie,  
In spring time, etc.

This carol they began that hour,  
With a hey, with a ho, and a hey nonino—  
How that a life was but a flower,  
In spring time, etc.

Then pretty lovers take the time,  
With a hey, with a ho, and a hey nonino,  
For love is crownéd with the prime,  
In spring time, etc.

From *As You Like It*.

## SONG FOR MARIANA

Take, O take those lips away,  
That so sweetly were forsworn,  
And those eyes, the break of day,  
Lights that do mislead the morn;  
But my kisses bring again, bring again—  
Seals of love, but sealed in vain, sealed in vain.  
*From Measure for Measure.*

## AUBADE

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,  
And Phoebus 'gins arise,  
His steeds to water at those springs  
On chaliced flowers that lies;  
And winking Mary-buds begin  
To ope their golden eyes:  
With every thing that pretty is,  
My lady sweet, arise!  
Arise, arise!

*From Cymbeline.*

## A ROGUE'S PHILOSOPHY

When daffodils begin to peer,  
With hey the doxy over the dale!  
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;  
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.  
  
The white sheet bleaching on the hedge,—  
With hey! the sweet birds, O how they sing!—  
Doth set my pugging tooth on edge;  
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.

The lark, that tirra-lyra chants,—  
With hey! with hey! the thrush and the jay!—  
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,  
While we lie tumbling in the hay.

But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?  
The pale moon shines by night:  
And when I wander here and there,  
I then do most go right.

If tinkers may have leave to live  
And bear the sow-skin budget,  
Then my account I well may give,  
And in the stocks avouch it.

Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,  
And merrily hent the stile-a:  
A merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

*From The Winter's Tale.*

## FAIRY SONGS

### (i)

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:  
In a cowslip's bell I lie;  
There I couch when owls do cry.  
On the bat's back do I fly  
After summer merrily.  
Merrily, merrily shall I live now  
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

*From The Tempest.*

### (ii)

You spotted snakes with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;  
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,  
Come not near our fairy queen.

Weaving spiders, come not here;  
Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence!  
Beetles black, approach not near;  
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

Philomel, with melody  
Sing in our sweet lullaby;  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby;

Never harm,  
Nor spell nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh;  
So, good night, with lullaby.

*From A Midsummer-Night's Dream.*

## SONNETS

[When Wordsworth (writing of the sonnet) said "With this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart," he did not foresee the great controversy which has arisen among critics who regard the sonnets as adequate material for the history of the author's personal life. The problems which face the would-be interpreter are as fascinating as numerous; but it is better to admit frankly that they are insoluble and thus avoid what a recent writer has called "the Serbonian Bog of the sonnets." Let us read these poems for their own sake. There is, however, one point that may be regarded as free from controversy—here Shakespeare shows very clearly his own belief in the immortality of his verse. The following selection is printed in the order in which the sonnets appeared in the edition published in 1609.]

From fairest creatures we desire increase,  
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,  
But as the ripper should by time decease,  
His tender heir might bear his memory:  
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,  
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,  
Making a famine where abundance lies,  
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.



Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament  
And only herald to the gaudy spring,  
Within thine own bud buriest thy content  
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.  
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,  
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?  
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.  
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,  
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?  
If the true concord of well tunéd sounds,  
By unions married, do offend thine ear,  
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds  
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.  
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,  
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;  
Resembling sire and child and happy mother,  
Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing:  
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,  
Sings this to thee: "Thou single wilt prove none."

- Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? ,  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

•When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone bewep my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
With what I most enjoy contented least;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
Like to the lark at break of day arising  
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

•When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:  
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,  
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:  
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,  
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
The sad account of fore-bemoanéd moan,  
Which I new pay as if not paid before.  
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,  
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,  
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy,  
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride  
With ugly rack on his celestial face,  
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,  
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:

But, for their virtue only is their show,  
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade,  
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;  
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:  
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,  
When that shall fade, my verse distils your truth.

• Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;  
But you shall shine more bright in these contents  
Than unswept stone besmeared with sluttish time.  
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,  
And broils root out the work of masonry,  
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn  
The living record of your memory.  
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity  
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room  
Even in the eyes of all posterity  
That wear this world out to the ending doom.  
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,  
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

• Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,  
So do our minutes hasten to their end;  
Each changing place with that which goes before,  
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.  
Nativity, once in the main of light,  
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,  
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,  
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.  
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth  
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,  
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,  
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:  
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,  
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

Against my love shall be, as I am now,  
With Time's injurious hand crushed and o'erworn;  
When hours have drained his blood and filled his brow  
With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn  
Hath travelled on to age's steepy night,  
And all those beauties whereof now he's king  
Are vanishing or vanished out of sight,  
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;  
For such a time do I now fortify  
Against confounding age's cruel knife,  
That he shall never cut from memory  
My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life:  
His beauty shall in these black lines be seen,  
And they shall live, and he in them still green.

No longer mourn for me when I am dead  
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell  
Give warning to the world that I am fled  
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:  
Nay, if you read this line, remember not  
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,  
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,  
If thinking on me then should make you woe.  
O, if, I say, you look upon this verse  
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,  
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,  
But let your love even with my life decay;  
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,  
And mock you with me after I am gone.

That time of year thou mayst in me behold .  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day  
As after sunset fadeth in the west;  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.

In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire  
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the death-bed whereon it must expire  
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

    This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,  
    To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,  
While comments of your praise, richly compiled,  
Reserve their character with golden quill  
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.  
I think good thoughts whilst other write good words,  
And like the unlettered clerk still cry "Amen"  
To every hymn that able spirit affords  
In polished form of well-refined pen.  
Hearing you praised, I say "'Tis so, 'tis true,"  
And to the most of praise add something more;  
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,  
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.  
    Then others for the breath of words respect,  
    Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,  
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:  
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;  
My bonds in thee are all determinate.  
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?  
And for that riches where is my deserving?  
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,  
And so my patent back again is swerving.  
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,  
Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking;  
So thy great gift, upon misprison growing,  
Comes home again, on better judgment making.  
    Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,  
    In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,  
For term of life thou art assuréd mine;  
And life no longer than thy love will stay,  
For it depends upon that love of thine.  
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,  
When in the least of them my life hath end.  
I see a better state to me belongs  
Than that which on thy humour doth depend:  
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,  
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie.  
O, what a happy title do I find,  
Happy to have thy love, happy to die!  
But what's so blesséd fair that fears no blot?  
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

• How like a winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!  
What old December's bareness every where!  
And yet this time removed was summer's time,  
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,  
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,  
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:  
Yet this abundant issue seemed to me  
But hope of orphans and unfathered fruit;  
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;  
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer  
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

• From you have I been absent in the spring,  
When proud-pied April dressed in all his trim  
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,  
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.  
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell  
Of different flowers in odour and in hue  
Could make me any summer's story tell,  
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew;

Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,  
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;  
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,  
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.  
Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,  
As with your shadow I with these did play.

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,  
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,  
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold  
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,  
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turned  
In process of the seasons have I seen,  
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned,  
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.  
Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,  
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;  
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,  
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:  
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:  
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

•When in the chronicle of wasted time  
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme  
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,  
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,  
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,  
I see their antique pen would have expressed  
Even such a beauty as you master now.  
So all their praises are but prophecies  
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;  
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,  
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:  
For we, which now behold these present days,  
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,  
Can yet the lease of my true love control,  
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.  
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured  
And the sad augurs mock their own presage;  
Incertainties now crown themselves assured  
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.  
Now with the drops of this most balmy time  
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,  
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,  
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:  
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,  
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

- Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove:  
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wandering bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
Love alters with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error and upon me proved,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

- How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st,  
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds  
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st  
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,  
Do I envý those jacks<sup>1</sup> that nimble leap  
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,  
Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest reap,  
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!

<sup>1</sup> Keys of a virginal.



To be so tickled, they would change their state  
And situation with those dancing chips,  
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,  
Making dead wood more blest than living lips.

Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,  
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

•The expense of spirit in a waste of shame  
Is lust in action; and till action, lust  
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,  
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,  
Enjoyed no sooner but despised straight,  
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had  
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,  
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;  
Mad in pursuit and in possession so;  
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;  
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;  
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.  
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well  
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,  
Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy "Will,"  
And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;  
Thus far for love my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.  
"Will" will fulfil the treasure of thy love,  
Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.  
In things of great receipt with ease we prove  
Among a number one is reckoned none:  
Then in the number let me pass untold,  
Though in thy store's account I one must be;  
For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold  
That nothing me, a something sweet to thee:  
Make but my name thy love, and love that still,  
And then thou lov'st me, for my name is "Will".

• When my love swears that she is made of truth,  
I do believe her, though I know she lies,  
That she might think me some untutored youth,  
Unlearnéd in the world's false subtleties.  
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,  
Although she knows my days are past the best,  
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:  
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed.  
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?  
And wherefore say not I that I am old?  
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,  
And age in love loves not to have years told:  
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,  
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.



## VII

# UNFAMILIAR QUOTATIONS

[Of course, what is not familiar to one reader may be quite familiar to another. None of the following items is contained in Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*.]

Sorrow concealed, like an oven stopped,  
Doth burn the heart to cinders where it is.

*Titus Andronicus*, II. 4.

Like one that stands upon a promontory,  
And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,  
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye.

*King Henry VI, Part III*, III. 2.

Small have continual plodders ever won,  
Save base authority from others' books.

*Love's Labour's Lost*, I. 1.

• One whom the music of his own vain tongue  
Doth ravish like enchanting harmony.

*Love's Labour's Lost*, I. 1.

When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name.

*Love's Labour's Lost*, III. 1.

The blood of youth burns not with such excess  
As gravity's revolt to wantonness.

*Love's Labour's Lost*, V. 2.

A light heart lives long.

*Love's Labour's Lost*, V. 2.

None are so surely caught when they are caught  
As wit turned fool.

*Love's Labour's Lost*, V. 3.

Fire that's closest kept burns most of all.

. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. 2.

Though the chameleon Love can feed on the air, I am one that am  
nourished by my victuals, and would fain have meat.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. 1.

Upon a homely object Love can wink.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. 4.

A man is never undone till he be hanged.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. 5.

Wilt thou reach stars, because they shine on thee?

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III. 1.

Where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there commendations go with pity.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, I. 1.

Briers shall have leaves as well as thorns,

And be as sweet as sharp.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, IV. 4.

Praising what is lost makes the remembrance dear.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, V. 3.

• Love that comes too late,

Like a remorseful pardon slowly carried,

To the great sender turns a sour offence.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, V. 3.

The venom clamours of a jealous woman

Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.

*Comedy of Errors*, V. 1.

To do a great right, do a little wrong.

*Merchant of Venice*, IV. 1.

Nothing is good, I see, without respect.<sup>1</sup>

*Merchant of Venice*, V. 1.

The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark

When neither is attended.

*Merchant of Venice*, V. 1.

An old man can do somewhat.

*King Henry IV, Part II*, V. 4.

Unregarded age in corners thrown.

*As You Like It*, III. 1.

<sup>1</sup> I.e., out of relation.

As wholesome as sweet.

*Hamlet*, II. 2.

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well.

*Hamlet*, V. 2.

Things won are done: joy's soul lies in the doing.

*Troilus and Cressida*, I. 2.

The amity that wisdom knits not, folly may easily untie.

*Troilus and Cressida*, II. 3.

Sometimes we are devils to ourselves,  
When we will tempt the frailty of our powers.

*Troilus and Cressida*, IV. 4.

There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,  
Nay, her foot speaks.

*Troilus and Cressida*, IV. 5.

What we do not see we tread upon, and never think of it.

*Measure for Measure*, III. 1.

No might nor greatness in mortality  
Can censure 'scape: back-wounding calumny  
The whitest virtue strikes.

*Measure for Measure*, III. 2.

This is nothing . . . 'Tis like the breath of an unfeed lawyer.

*King Lear*, I. 4.

What need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of  
'em? they were the most needless creatures living should we ne'er  
have use for 'em, and would most resemble sweet instruments  
hung up in cases that keep their sounds to themselves.

*Timon of Athens*, I. 2.

There is no time so miserable but a man may be true.

*Timon of Athens*, IV. 3.

Promising is the very air o' the time; it opens the eyes of expectation:  
performance is ever the duller for his act.

*Timon of Athens*, V. 1.

Eternity was in our lips and eyes.

*Antony and Cleopatra*, I. 3.

Better to leave undone than by our deed  
Acquire too high a fame when him we serve's away.

*Antony and Cleopatra*, III. 1.

•The April's in her eyes: it is love's spring.

*Antony and Cleopatra*, III. 2.

'Tis time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss.

*Pericles*, I. 2.

One sorrow never comes but brings an heir  
That may succeed as his inheritor.

*Pericles*, I. 4.

Crickets sing at the oven's mouth.

*Pericles*, III. 1.

All of her that is out-of-door most rich!

*Cymbeline*, I. 6.

A beggar's book out-worths a noble's blood.

*King Henry VIII*, I. 2.





VIII  
SOME "OPINIONS OF THE PRESS"

[Shakespeare's contemporaries regarded him merely as a successful poet and dramatist: later generations have discovered the greatness of his genius. The editors of the First Folio, published seven years after his death, were able to say: "These plays have had their trial already and stood out all appeals." In 1630 we have Milton's famous epitaph, and in 1640 Leonard Digges' record that Shakespeare's plays were drawing crowds to all parts of the house<sup>1</sup>.

After the Restoration, when the French classical taste had spread to England, Shakespeare's indifference to "classical canons" could hardly have escaped observation; and Evelyn writes in his Diary (1661): "Now the old plays began to disgust the refined age." For all this, we know that several of Shakespeare's plays were frequently acted on the Restoration stage. We find the virtuous and eccentric Duchess of Newcastle writing of Shakespeare with great enthusiasm in 1664, but it was Dryden who, about the same time, discovered Shakespeare's "universal mind"; and in the following century, first Pope and then Johnson, placed him above all other men.

In the generation following Johnson's death Coleridge was leading the van in a new outburst of æsthetic criticism, and since then each succeeding generation has paid its own tribute of criticism or research. The Shakespearean mine appears to be inexhaustible, and who can say when the last nugget will be found?

Within a decade of Shakespeare's death his plays were being acted in Germany, and later on Lessing, Schlegel and Goethe were to be counted among his most enthusiastic admirers. In later times the energy of the over-subtle German critics has been something of an embarrassment; and it may be said that, if the Germans have found too much in Shakespeare, the French have found too little. To the Gallic mind—perhaps at its greatest brilliance in Voltaire—Shakespeare has been a stumbling-block; and one might say that a Frenchman who could understand him would be almost as unique a person as Shakespeare himself.

The following quotations are a few representative opinions chosen from Elizabethan times to our own.]

### •AN UPSTART CROW

There is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers hart wrapt in a Players hyde*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and beeing an absolute *Johannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a country.

ROBERT GREENE (from *Greenes Groats-worth of Wit*, 1592).

<sup>1</sup> The theatres were closed from 1642 till the Restoration (1660).

## HONEY-TONGUED SHAKESPEARE

As the soule of *Euphorbus* was thought to live in *Pythagoras*, so the sweete wittie soule of *Ovid* lives in mellifluous & hony-tongued *Shakespeare*: witnes his *Venus* and *Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugred Sonnets among his private friends, &c.

As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines, so *Shakespeare* among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage. . . . As *Epius Stolo* said, that the Muses would speake with *Plautus* tongue, if they would speake Latin, so I say that the Muses would speake with *Shakespeares* fine filed phrase, if they would speake English.

FRANCIS MERES (from *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury*, 1598).

## "SWEET MR. SHAKESPEARE"

Ey marry, sir, these have some life in them! Let this duncified worlde esteeme of Spencer and Chaucer, I'le worshipp sweet Mr Shakespeare and to honour him will lay his Venus and Adonis under my pillowe, as we reade of one (i doe not well remember his name, but I am sure he was a King) slept with Homer under his bed's heade.

ANONYMOUS (from *The Returne from Parnassus*—a play acted by students of St. John's College, Cambridge, 1601).

## WHAT HE HATH LEFT US

Thou art a Monument, without a tomb,  
And art alive still while thy Booke doth live,  
And we have wits to read and praise to give.

BEN JONSON (from the First Folio, 1623).

## ON SHAKESPEAR, 1630

What needs my *Shakespear* for his honour'd Bones,  
The labour of an age in piléd Stones,  
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid  
Under a Star-ypointing *Pyramid*?  
Dear son of memory, great heir of Fame,  
What need'st thou such weak wites of thy name?  
Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thyself a live-long Monument.  
For whilst to th' shame of slow-endeavouring art,  
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each heart  
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalu'd Book,  
Those Delphick lines with deep impression took,  
Then thou our fancy of it self bereaving,  
Dost make us Marble with too much conceaving;  
And so Sepulcher'd in such pomp dost lie,  
That Kings for such a Tomb would wish to die.

JOHN MILTON (from *Poems*,<sup>1</sup> 1645).

## A PLAY-GOER

*January* 6, 1663.—After dinner to the Duke's house, and there saw "Twelfth Night" acted well, though it be but a silly play, and not related at all to the name or day.

*August* 20, 1666.—To Deptford by water, reading "Othello, Moore of Venice," which I ever heretofore esteemed a mighty good play, but having so lately read "The Adventures of Five Houres," it seems a mean thing.

*August* 15, 1667.—Went to the King's, and there saw "The Merry Wives of Windsor," which did not please me at all, in no part of it.

*November* 7, 1667.—Resolved with Sir W. Pen to go see "The Tempest," an old play of Shakespeare's. The house mighty full; the King and Court there, and the most innocent play that ever I saw. The play has no great wit, but yet good, above ordinary plays.

<sup>1</sup> This epitaph had appeared in the Second Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays.

*November 13, 1667.*—I and my wife and Willet to the Duke of York's house, and there saw "The Tempest" again, which is very pleasant, and full of so good variety that I cannot be more pleased almost in a comedy, only the seamen's part a little too tedious.

SAMUEL PEPYS (from *Diary*).

## •IMAGES OF NATURE

Shakespeare was the man who of all Modern, and perhaps Ancient Poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the Images of Nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learn'd; he needed not the spectacles of Books to read Nature; he look'd inwards, and found her there.

DRYDEN (from the essay, *Of Dramatick Poesie*, 1668).

## "THIS WILLIAM"

This Wm. being inclined naturally to Poetry and acting, came to London I guesse about 18, and was an Actor at one of the Play-houses and did act exceedingly well. . . . He began early to make essayes at Dramatique Poetry, which at that time was very lowe; and his Playes tooke well. . . . I have heard Sr Wm. Davenant and Mr. Thomas Shadwell (who is counted the best Comoedian we have now) say, that he had a most prodigious Witt, and did admire his natural parts beyond all other Dramaticall writers. He was wont to say, That he never blotted out a line in his life: sayd Ben Johnson, "I wish he had blotted out a thousand." His Comedies will remain witt as long as the English tongue is understood.

JOHN AUBREY (from *Brief Lives*, 1681).

## “A BLOODY FARCE”

There is in this Play [*Othello*] some humour, and ramble of Comical Wit, some shew, and some *Mimickry* to divert the spectators: but the tragical part is plainly none other than a Bloody Farce without salt or savour.

THOMAS RYMER (from *A Short View of Tragedy*, 1693).

## •“AN ORIGINAL”

If ever any Author deserved the name of an *Original*, it was *Shakespear*. *Homer* himself drew not his art so immediately from the fountains of Nature. . . . The Poetry of *Shakespear* was Inspiration indeed: he is not so much an Imitator, as an Instrument, of Nature; and 'tis not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks thro' him. . . . He seems to have known the world by Intuition, to have look'd thro' human nature at one glance, and to be the only Author that gives ground for a very new opinion, That the Philosopher, and even the Man of the world, may be *born*, as well as the Poet.

ALEXANDER POPE (from *Preface to the Plays of Shakespeare*, 1725).

## • COMPLAINT TO A LADY

I am angry with the English, Madam, not only because they have (as I hear) taken Pondicherry, but also because they are insisting that their Shakespeare is very much more than a clown of the circus. Consider, Madam, that his tragedy of *Richard III* (which they compare with *Cinna*<sup>1</sup>) had nine years for unity of time, a dozen towns and battle-fields for unity of place, and thirty-seven principal events for unity of action! Don't you think that our Paris water-carriers, if they took to play-writing, could do better

<sup>1</sup> A tragedy by Corneille.

than that? I am bothering you with all this, Madam, because I am so full of it. Is it not sad that a nation that has produced Newton should produce such monstrosities, and what is more, think highly of them?

VOLTAIRE (from a letter to Madame du Deffand, December 9, 1760—Trans. Anon.).

## •PRO AND CON

*Shakespeare* is above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature. His characters are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated. Even where the agency is supernatural the dialogue is level with life. Other writers disguise the most natural passions and most frequent incidents; so that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world. This therefore is the praise of *Shakespeare*, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious extasies, by reading human sentiments in human language; by scenes by which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions.

*Shakespeare* with his excellencies has likewise faults. He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose. A quibble is to *Shakespeare*, what luminous vapours are to the traveller; he follows it at all adventures, it is sure to lead him out of his way, and sure to engulf him in the mire. He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the conclusion.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (from *Preface to The Plays of William Shakespeare*, 1765, abridged).



## •LIGHT IN DARKNESS

The first page I read in him made me his for life, and when I had reached the end of the first play, I stood like one born blind on whom in a moment a miraculous hand has bestowed sight. . . . Everything was new to me, unknown; and the unwonted light dazzled my eyes.

GOETHE (from *Zum Shakespeare Tag*, 1771: *Werke*, Weimar ed. vol. XXXVII—Trans. Anon.).

## “THE SEEDS OF THINGS”

He differs essentially from all other writers: Him we may profess rather to feel than to understand; and it is safer to say, on many occasions, that we are possessed by him, than that we possess him. And no wonder;—He scatters the seeds of things, the principles of character and action, with so cunning a hand, yet with so careless an air, and, master of our feelings, submits himself so little to our judgment, that every thing seems superior. . . . His characters not only act and speak in strict conformity to nature, but in strict relation to us.

MAURICE MORGANN (from *Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff*, 1777).

## GEORGE III IS NOT AMUSED

From players the King went to plays, till at last he came to Shakespeare. “Was there ever,” cried he, “such stuff as great part of Shakespeare?—only one must not say so! But what think you? What? Is his not sad stuff? What? What?”

“Yes, indeed! I think so, sir, though mixed with such excellence that——”

“Oh!” cried he, laughing good-humouredly, “I know it is not to be said! but it’s true. Only it’s Shakespeare, and nobody dare abuse him.”

Then he enumerated many of the characters and parts of plays that he objected to; and when he had run them over, finished with again laughing and exclaiming—

“But we should be stoned for saying so!”

FANNY BURNEY (from *Diary*, December 19, 1785).

### •A PROPHET

If Shakespeare be the wonder of the ignorant, he is, and ought to be, much more the wonder of the learned: not only from profundity of thought, but from his astonishing and intuitive knowledge of what man must be at all times, and under all circumstances, he is rather to be looked upon as a prophet than as a poet. Yet, with all these unbounded powers, with all this might and majesty of genius, he makes us feel as if he were unconscious of himself, and of his high destiny, disguising the half god in the simplicity of a child.

COLERIDGE (from *Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton*, IX, 1813).

### THE GOOD GENIUS

I remember your saying that you had notions of a good Genius presiding over you. I have of late had the same thought, for things which I do half at Random are afterwards confirmed by my judgement in a dozen features of Propriety. Is it too daring to fancy Shakespeare this Presider? . . . I never quite despair and I read Shakespeare—indeed I think I shall never read any other Book much. Now this might lead me into a long Confab but I desist. I am very near agreeing with Hazlitt that Shakespeare is enough for us.

KEATS (from a Letter to Benjamin Robert Haydon, 1817).

## •THE GENIUS OF HUMANITY

He was like the genius of humanity, changing places with all of us at pleasure, and playing with our purposes as with his own. He turned the globe round for his amusement, and surveyed the generations of men and the individuals as they passed with their different concerns, passions, follies, vices, virtues, actions and motives—as well those that they knew, as those that they did not know or acknowledge to themselves.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (from *Lectures on the English Poets*, 1818).

## INDECORUM

There is nothing in my pages which a Lady may not read aloud without indecorum, which is more than can be said of Shakespeare.

CHARLES LAMB (from a Letter to Wordsworth, 1823).

## •SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art free.  
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,  
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,  
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,  
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,  
Spares but the cloudy border of his base  
To the foil'd searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,  
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,  
Didst tread on earth unguess'd at.—Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,  
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,  
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

MATTHEW ARNOLD (from *The Strayed Reveller*, 1849).

## REPULSION, WEARINESS, AND BEWILDERMENT

I have read the plays several times over, and have invariably experienced the same repulsion, weariness, and bewilderment. All the characters speak the same Shakespearean, affected, unnatural language, which not only could they not speak, but which no real people could ever have spoken anywhere. They are all afflicted by a common intemperance of language. In love, fighting, preparing for death, or dying, they all talk at great length about quite irrelevant matters, and seem to pay more attention to the sound of words and the making of puns than to the expression of thoughts.

TOLSTOY (from *Shakespeare and the Drama*, 1898—Trans. Anon.).

## THE BACONIAN BELIEVERS

I do not wish to speak with any disrespect of that view of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays which is so firmly held by officers of the navy and the army, by one of His Majesty's judges, and the manager of more than one large drapery establishment.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (from *On Reading Shakespeare*, 1933).



## THE PLAYS AND THEIR DATES

[A great deal of work has been done by Shakespearean scholars whose aim was to discover the right chronological order of the plays and so assist our understanding of Shakespeare's development as an artist; but even now it is not possible to state the original date of each play. In some cases the earliest available text is a revision. The following statement is offered as approximately correct according to views now generally held. Six plays not anthologised in this book are marked thus \*.]

1591-5

*King Henry VI, Parts I\*, II\* and III*  
*King Richard III*  
*Titus Andronicus\**  
*Love's Labour's Lost*  
*Two Gentlemen of Verona*  
*Comedy of Errors\**

1595-7

*All's Well that Ends Well*  
*Romeo and Juliet*  
*Midsummer-Night's Dream*  
*Taming of the Shrew\**  
*King Richard II*  
*King John*  
*Merchant of Venice*

1597-1600

*King Henry IV, Parts I and II*  
*Much Ado About Nothing*  
*Merry Wives of Windsor\**  
*King Henry V*  
*Julius Cæsar*  
*As You Like It*

1600-4

*Twelfth Night*  
*Hamlet*  
*Troilus and Cressida*  
*Measure for Measure*  
*Othello*

1604-9

*Macbeth*  
*King Lear*  
*Timon of Athens*  
*Antony and Cleopatra*  
*Coriolanus*  
*Pericles*

1609-13

*Cymbeline*  
*Winter's Tale*  
*Tempest*  
*King Henry VIII*





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